P. O. Angel

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Johnson

RASSELAS,

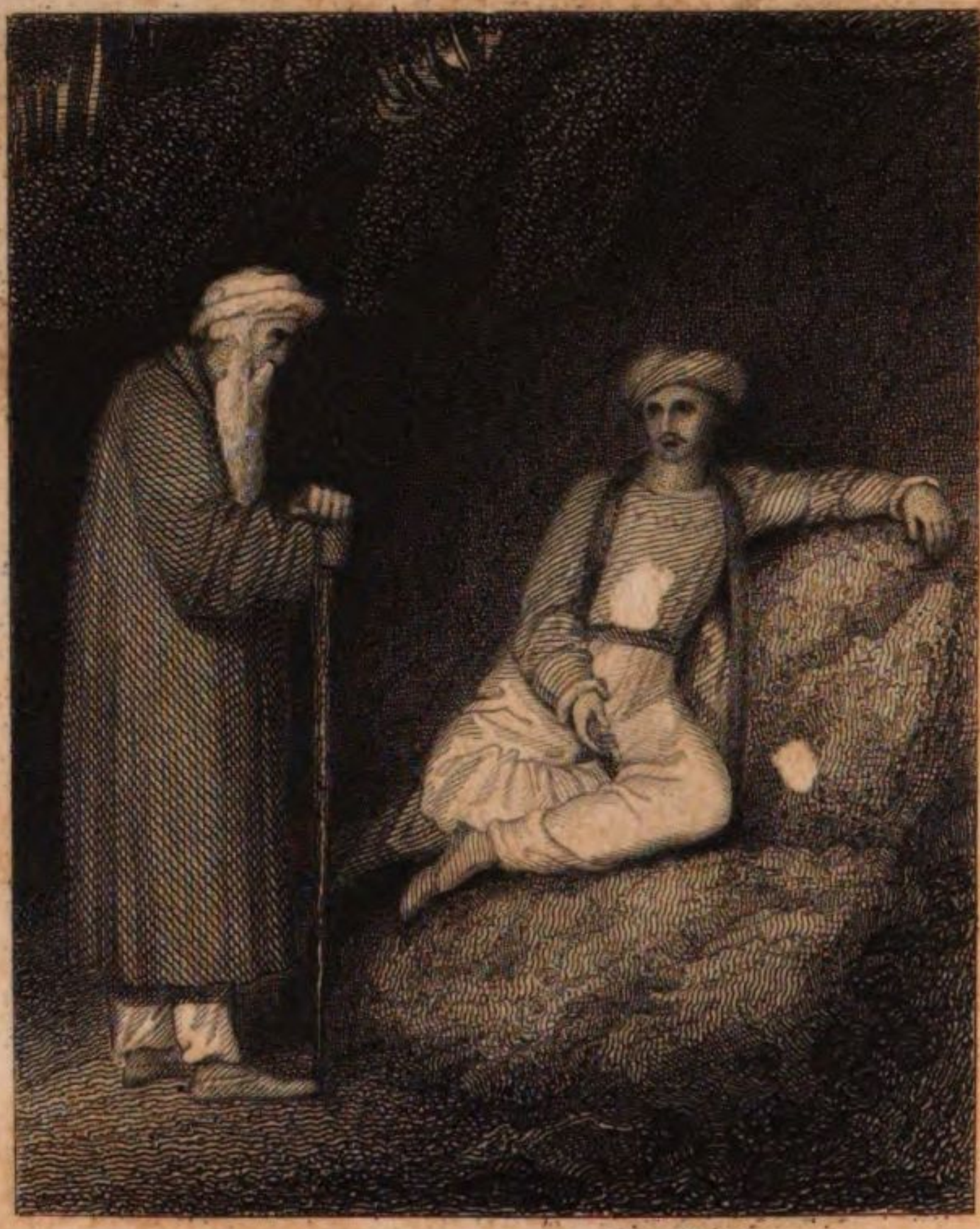
AND

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES:

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA:

BY JOHN LANGHORNE, D.D.



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THE

HISTORY OF RASSELAS,

Prince of Abyssinia.

AND

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA.

LONDON,
CHARLES DALY,
14, LEICESTER ST. LEICESTER SQ.
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Mr. Lockhart mentions, in his Life of Sir Walter Scott, that the great novelist frequently remarked that he derived more pleasure from reading The Vanity of Human Wishes and London, than from any other poetical compositions he could mention. "And I think (continues that inestimable biographer) I never saw his countenance more indicative of high admiration than while reciting aloud from those masterly productions."

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"This Tale, with all the charms of oriental imagery, and all the force and beauty of which the English language is capable, leads us through the most important scenes of human life, and shows us that this stage of our being is full of 'vanity and vexation of spirit.' To those who look no farther than the present life, or who maintain that human nature has not fallen from the state in which it was created, the instruction of this sublime story will be of no avail. But they who think justly and feel with strong sensibility will listen with eagerness and admiration to its truth and wisdom.

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"Notwithstanding my high admiration of Rasselas, I will not maintain that the 'morbid melancholy' in Johnson's constitution may not, perhaps, have made life appear to him more insipid and unhappy than it generally is; for I am sure that he had less enjoyment from it than I have. Yet, whatever additional shade his own particular sensations may have thrown on his representation of life, attentive observation and close inquiry have convinced me that there is too much reality in the gloomy picture. The truth, however, is, that we judge of the happiness and misery of life differently at different times, according to the state of our changeable frame. I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady educated in France: '*Ma foi, Monsieur, notre bonheur depend de la façon que notre sang circule.*' This I have learned from a pretty hard course of experience, and would, from sincere benevolence, impress upon all who honour this book with a perusal, that, until a steady conviction is obtained, that the present life is an imperfect state, and only a passage to a better, if we comply with the divine scheme of progressive improvement; and also that it is a part of the mysterious plan of Providence that intellectual beings must 'be made perfect through suffering;' there will be a continual recurrence of disappointment and uneasiness. But if we walk with hope in the 'mid-day sun' of revelation, our temper and disposition will be such that the comforts and enjoyments in our way will be relished, while we patiently support the inconveniences and pains."

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As an author, Johnson was more distinguished than any other literary character which this country ever produced. His great works, and those on which his reputation chiefly rests, are his Dictionary, Rambler, Lives of the Poets, and Rasselas. In his Rasselas and his Rambler he is in his peculiar element.

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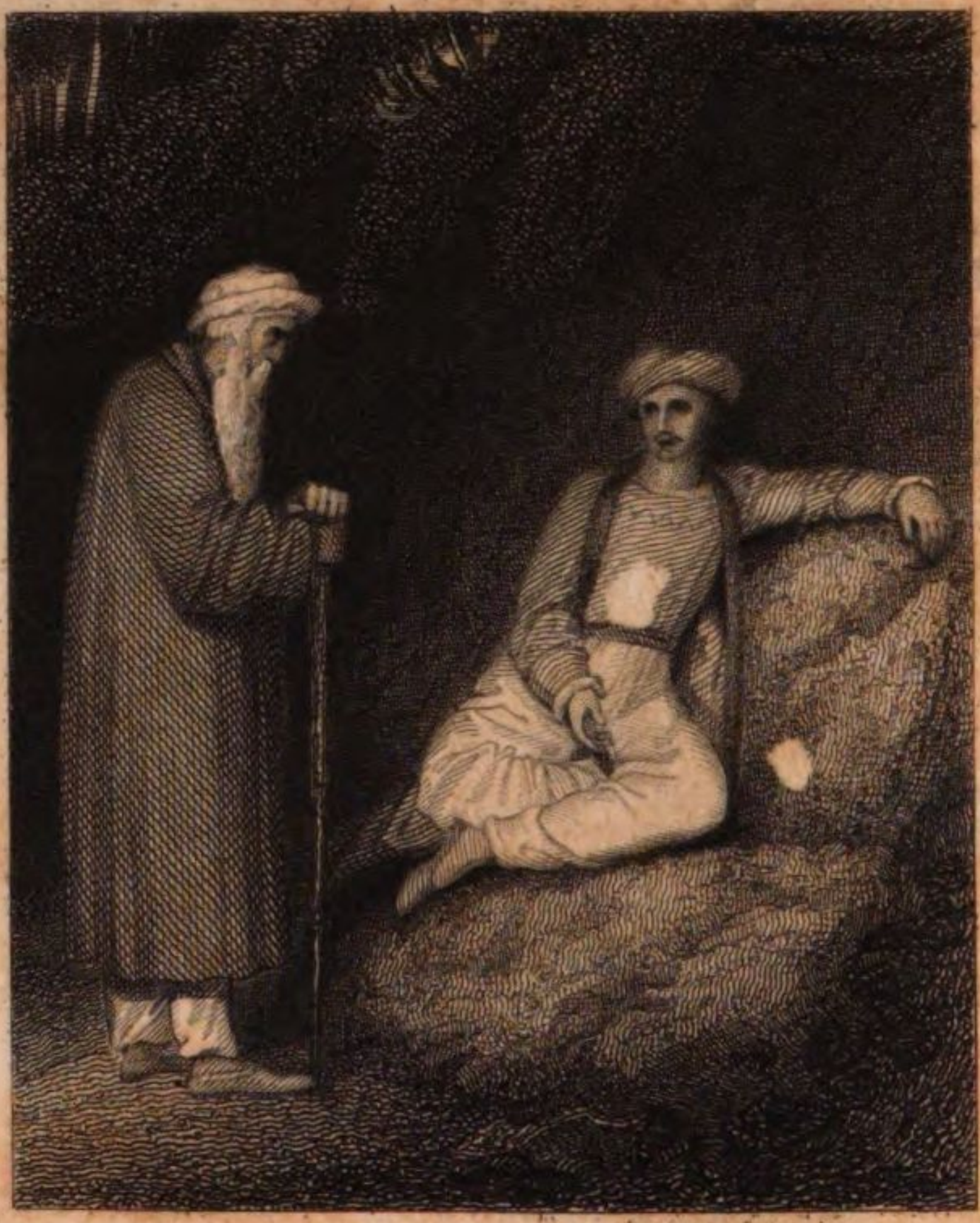

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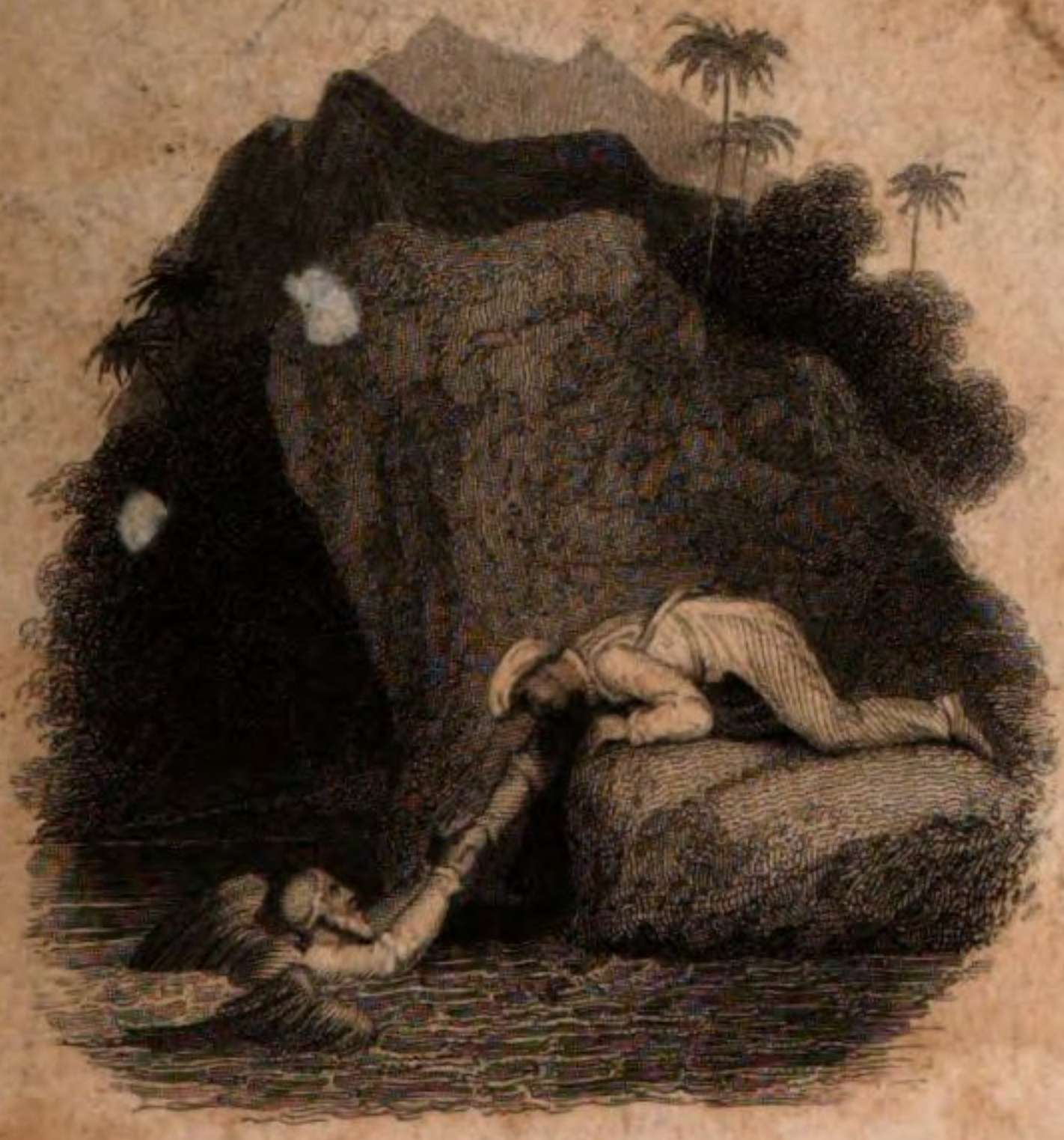

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In 1767, he married Mrs. Cracroft, through whose friends he received a rectory in Somersetshire; but losing his wife in the following year, he removed to Folkstone, the residence of his brother William, who assisted him in the celebrated translation of Plutarch's Lives, which appeared in 1770.

In 1771, Dr Langhorne published his Fables of Flora, The Origin of the Veil, &c.; and in the beginning of 1772, he married a Miss Thompson, a lady of great beauty, who died in 1776. He next fixed his residence at Blagdon, where he practised both in a magisterial and clerical capacity; and after having been made a prebendary of Wells, in 1777, he died April 1st, 1779, in the 45th year of his age. In addition to the works beforementioned, he was the author of Effusions of Friendship and Fancy, Letters to Eleanora, The Country Justice, The Fatal Prophecy, a tragedy, besides some sermons, poems, &c. Dr. Langhorne has been described as of an amiable disposition, a friend to morality, and a refined wit.

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BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D

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CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow, attend to the history of Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place, which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the

middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man without the help of engines could open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity; to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they to whom it was new, always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building stood from century to century deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage, every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had deposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigences of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages, who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always

raging, and where man preyed upon man. To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful; few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves; all but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him; he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure; he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes. This singularity of

his humour made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporeal necessities with myself; he is hungry, and crops the grass, he is thirsty, and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he arises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification; or he has some desires distinct from sense which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walks thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free; I fear pain when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated. Surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar en joyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicuity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAPTER III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was

not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man thus obtrude upon me; shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again, must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but, being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others." "You, sir," said the sage, "are the first who have complained of misery in the *happy valley*. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all the emperor of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply; if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint; if I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite en-

deavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much; give me something to desire." The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and

grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done. This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness either end or means. He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened: he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought. His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various

conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures; but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle, that he forgot his real solitude; and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but, resolving to weary, by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!" Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse, and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his con-

finement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or the imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four-and-twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors and the absurd institutions of my country. I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which never can be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes,

admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instruction of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known or not considered how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an

eagle in the grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways

of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAPTER VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

AMONG the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel, which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy

in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that, instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains. Having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire farther before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are tc pass. You will be necesarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it, faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the

prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied. I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly farther than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but, as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall: no care will then be necessary, but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other!"

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"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tran quillity. I have been told, that respiration is

difficult upon lofty mountains, yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall: therefore I suspect, that, from any height where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good. Every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happi-

ness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and

he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had ever been known; the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince com-

manded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Afric and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has yet been discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand, but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education than such as might qualify me for commerce; and, discovering in me great strength of memory and quickness of apprehension, often declared his

hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistences cannot both be true."

"Inconsistences," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right, but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of great security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he, whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed by successive masters in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but, as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors; because, when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in

commerce: and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. 'This, young man,' said he, 'is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich; if, in four years you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall always be equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.'

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

"I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connexion with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage; it was sufficient for me that, wherever I wandered, I should

see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and, thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety; but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities; it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements

when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and, purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn at the usual expense the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants and the exactions of officers; and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate; it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince; "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at

Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men, some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high that the merchants, with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money, and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw

many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds, and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAPTER X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

"WHEREVER I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the angelic nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent, which it received by accident at first; or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first

writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art; that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw everything with a new purpose. My sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest, and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he

must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety: for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study, and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before, or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must not neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires

that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; contemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

"His labour is not yet at an end: he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

CHAPTER XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthusiastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast con-

vinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria; and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe: the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge; whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained: a thousand arts, of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them, is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful; or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiatics and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser: knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their

knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince, with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions: it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you that have considered them, tell me the result."

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may

naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will, perhaps, find himself mistaken; yet he may go thither without folly; he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am, therefore, inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of

the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the despatch of many laborious works which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniences: they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who have all these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is everywhere a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I AM not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the

wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia, in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose, after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels."

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and, notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by

the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen, and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses,

I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the *happy valley* should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favour, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" said Rasselas. "Tell me without reserve, art thou content with thy condition? or dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and, at the annual visit of the emperor, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the incidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another; he that knows himself despised, will always be envious, and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the *happy valley*. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred; teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests and

boiling with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for those seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince. "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and, since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAPTER XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned

to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with such a companion; and that, if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion: "knowledge is more than equivalent to force The master of mechanics laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the cony. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in

the morning to choose a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince for a moment appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day; and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest; if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it

is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design, prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

THEY had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then, not suspicion, but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me.

You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

THE prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they might hide in their clothes; and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread

with delicacies; but, being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and ate the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was affrighted, because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac

was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage; and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers who have no other end of travel than curiosity. It will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your *choice of life*."

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise and offended by the crowds. Instruction

had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some days continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge and solicited his favour. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money: but the ladies could not for a long time comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with

fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life*.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence: "and who then," said he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat awhile silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the

assembly where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air and volatility of fancy as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me: yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life*."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and, therefore, you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it

at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

RASSELAS rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life, "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted; but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our pro-

spects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks, never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that, in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter. He followed the stream

of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He

exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience, concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the intructions of a superior being, and waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire the teachers of morality; they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly, without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My

daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end. I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should, therefore, always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry; and having heard of a hermit that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his

retreat, and inquire whether that felicity, which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man, whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state. They were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous; and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications

of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its stream sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what or who he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced they heard the sound of music and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove;

and, going still farther, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart, he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princes of the country; but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile: and the princess was so much

disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees, at such a distance from the cataract that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude eassay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other, mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms

of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniences for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him, and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life.*"

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I resolved

to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grew in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but,

after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciate.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty.

Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature, will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse

themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us, therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, 'That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness.'"

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse: I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature?"

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects: to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was

silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world; we have never yet been great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power, and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the

shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good; or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be sub-

jected to the will of a single man only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power," said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive

animals, and found them proud of their countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear; and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. "Answer," said she, "great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest through all thy course a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint?"

"You are then," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts." "I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their in-

digence from the rest; they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants than pleased with my readiness to succour them; and others, whose exigences compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH, perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord. If a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy: in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert;

each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progressions: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence; the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour; but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on to love less and less; and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation?"

"Surely," said the prince "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous; the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another; even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence that most deserve it; for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety by the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met, said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of

the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude; it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAPTER XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE conversation had a short pause. The prince having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," said he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur

or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favoured will think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit, which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet he that sees inferior desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice: and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it.

Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity; for what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural, and almost all political, evils are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All their virtue can afford is quietness of con-

science, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

"DEAR princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

"On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen they must be endured. But it is evident, that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies

or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward. The necessaries of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform; each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am sometimes disposed to think with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of

a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference: but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that, judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality: but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and no one ever varies his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtleties of argument. We are employed in a search of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist

each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution; will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world but for ourselves."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DEBATE OF MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

"THE good of the whole," said Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life are in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire,

without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed: they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children: the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage, at least, will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children."

"What reason cannot collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be

known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those whose accuracy of remark and comprehensiveness of knowledge made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other at a time when opinions are fixed and habits are established; when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible that two, travelling through the world, under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken; he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labours in vain; and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide: questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind; and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestic day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age, will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children; and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might

unite them; a time neither too early for the father nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions which flatter hope and attract desire are so constituted, that as we approach one we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both; but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAPTER XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

Here Imlac entered, and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from farther search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you

or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favoured will think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

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Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

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"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity; for what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

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"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children: the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

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"Those who marry at an advanced age, will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

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"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might

unite them; a time neither too early for the father nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions which flatter hope and attract desire are so constituted, that as we approach one we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both; but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAPTER XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered, and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from farther search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you

are making the choice of life you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders, and from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes, whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows?"

"To know any thing," returned the poet, "we must know its effects; to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, we must oppose it to the

past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern have understandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those

who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye or the imagination is struck with any uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

"I am willing," said the prince, "to see all that can deserve my search." "And I," said the princess, "shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity."

"The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the pyramids; fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah. "I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest till I have seen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

THE resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabric intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he showed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistable of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments; and, having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?"

"Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of those dreadful vaults, will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparations," said the prince, "I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you.

Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abyssinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than enclosure in this horrid cavern. You know I dare not disobey you; I must go if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never shall come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof; and, embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramid. "Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who, from time to time, poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the pyramids no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content

with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids, and confess thy folly!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

They rose up and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected; the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us: we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away; the Turks are now pursuing them by our

instigation, but I fear they they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir,' said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valour? The Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion, that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something

for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which

a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested: when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to Him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connexion of causes and

events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault; but, if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably imbittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him!

"Consider, princess, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and, being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror?"

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now; I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was from that time delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambi-

tion of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude, without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

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"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by

irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow, that what satisfaction this world can afford, must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement."

"How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not," replied Imlac, "dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world, when the image of your companion has left your thoughts."

"That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed

that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled; yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either; but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye; and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion; commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation?"

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried. The inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah, but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions, sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and, at last, wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might

have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

In seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hand of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the re-

lator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery, and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power; and, in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed,

and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time, and in what manner, I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger they slackened their course, and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring shaded with trees in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weep-

ing in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted; but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moonlight to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. The tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependents.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I ate rather to encourage my maids, than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself, therefore, to be undressed, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not

expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. 'Illustrious lady,' said he, 'my fortune is better than I have presumed to hope: I am told by my women that I have a princess in my camp.' 'Sir,' answered I, 'your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger, who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever.' 'Whoever, or whencesoever you are,' returned the Arab, 'your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction; the lance

that is lifted at guilt and power will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness."

"'How little,' said I, 'did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me?'

"'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, 'should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality.'

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be expected for a maid of common rank would be paid; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand; and then, smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after, the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him that I

would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniences for travel, my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked, in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access; for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

"We wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my

gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented, where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is a uniform and tractable vice; other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which sooths the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money, and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house, built with stone, in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. 'Lady,' said the Arab, 'you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security: here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.' He then led me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground.

His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity: but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile: but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening: I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do no-

thing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after, the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess, "why did you not make them companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room, as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and

absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing; for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot; of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without interrupting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him he looked on them with an inattentive superiority; when they vied for his regard he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take

nothing from the tediousness of life. As they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude; he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time; such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"Ye have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense: for, notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house he made many incursions into the neighbouring countries, and perhaps he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity; and, when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I

was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them or with me might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

"He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah, having heard her favourite's relation, rose and embraced her, and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAPTER XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them

went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas and fluent conversation are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels; and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of this rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his me-

mory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

"His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favourite studies are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closet retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance: 'For though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,' says he, 'bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.'"

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy."

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation: he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved

to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me."

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

"At last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: 'Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee.'

"I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested, that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

"'Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without dif-

ficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather, and the distribution of the seasons; the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervors of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator?"

CHAPTER XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

"I SUPPOSE he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:—

"'Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for, I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this

distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.'

"'How long, sir,' said I, 'has this great office been in your hands?'

"'About ten years ago,' said he, 'my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"'One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.'

"'Might not some other cause,' said I, 'produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day.'

"'Do not believe,' said he, with impatience, 'that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man

like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.'

"'Why, sir,' said I, 'do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?'

"'Because,' said he, 'I cannot prove it by any external evidence: and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I therefore shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself.'

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"'HEAR, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be

the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat! —hear me therefore with attention.

"'I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another looses by any imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not therefore, in thy administration of the year indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.'

"I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand. 'My heart,' said he, 'will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun.'"

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practise his

virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted?

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

"DISORDERS of intellect," answered Imlac, "happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can controul and repress, is it not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties; it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him, must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not: for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, sir, is one of the dangers, of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious of wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine

myself the queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of the mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have, in my chamber, heard the winds whistle, and the sheep bleat; sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to imagine the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour of my solitude; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," says Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes; when we first form them we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk

must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive, You know the qualities and causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty; I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider, that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended; but to me, who

am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account; for age had never been considered as the season of felicity; and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy; that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who en-

joyed pleasure no longer than they can confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented: "For nothing," said she, "is more common, than to call our own condition the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age, he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung in their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared that, by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own; and, perhaps, the distrust which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to con-

tinue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company: men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress." "That," said Pekuah, "must be my care; I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it; and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity; and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy, he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed at the Arab's Island. She told her tale

with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew; he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance: and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom,

the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and, lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey, and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience; in the attainment of sciences, which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life: I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity; but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him at-

tentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favour myself in a known error, or am determined by mine own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt; fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and

so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain; but when melancholic notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason; the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation which, when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which, from to time, breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPIC.

"ALL this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrollable and overwhelming idea, that

it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired whether they had contrived any new diversions for the next day? "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the Happy Valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies

them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life: and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and

it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

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diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare that she could not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed: but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image, is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by showing her something which she had not seen before?

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be

found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories, in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return." "No, I will not be left," answered Pekuah; "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"WHAT reason," said the prince, "can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume

with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight, as soon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original of ancient customs," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

'The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe

that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which

is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk; yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is

standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscerptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He, surely, can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order: she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things, knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn ali sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person,

and see all the parts of the government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved. when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

THE END OF RASSELAS.

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA:

BY

J. LANGHORNE, D. D.

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA.

CHAPTER I.

LET the sons and daughters of affliction receive comfort from hope. The motion of the sunbeams on the wave, is not more uncertain, than the condition of human life; misery, therefore, has much to hope, and happiness much to fear; but virtue has alwas a resource in Providence, which not only improves the blessings, but mitigates the evils of life.

In a pleasant valley of Mesopotamia, on the banks of the Irwan, lived Solyman, the son of Ardavan, the sage. He was early instructed in all the learning of the east; but, as his understanding opened, he grew weary of the labours of study, and thirsted only for the knowledge of mankind. With much importunity, he prevailed on his father to permit him to travel. "My son," said Ardavan, "let not your curiosity interrupt your happiness; all that nature can give you, is in the valley of Irwan; here you are cherished by the eye of affection, and indulged with all the bounties of the Eternal Sun. Travel is often dangerous and always inconvenient; your knowledge of men

may be purchased by experiencing their treachery, their cruelty, and their pride; the unsuspecting innocence of your heart, will expose you to the designs of the selfish, and the insolence of the vain; you will wander from place to place, only for amusement; as your heart can have no connexions that time or interest have rendered dear to you, you will be little affected by any thing you see; and, what is more than all, your virtue will be endangered: when you behold the universal prevalence of vice, when your eye is attracted by the flowery paths in which she seems to tread, you will find it difficult to withstand the force of example, and the blandishments of pleasure." Solyman humbled himself, and replied: "Prince of the sages that dwell between the rivers, let your ear be patient to the words of youth. Can Ardavan doubt the integrity of the heart, which his precepts have formed to virtue: or fear that Solyman should become the slave of vice? I am not a stranger to the manners of men, though I have mixed but little among them; nor am I unacquainted with the temptations to which I shall be exposed, nor unprepared to withstand them. Travel may be attended with some inconvenience, but it has many advantages: next to the knowledge of ourselves, most valuable is the law of nature; and this is to be acquired, only by attending her through the variety of her works: the more we behold of these, the more our ideas are enlarged and extended; and the nobler and more worthy conceptions we must entertain of that Power, who is the parent of universal being."

"My son," said Ardavan, "if you are determined to travel, let your ear attend to the instruc-

tions of age. Move not one pace from the valley of Irwan, if your heart rely not on the eternal Providence: it is that confidence alone which must support you under all the possible contingencies of distress. O let it not depart from you; it is the sovereign antidote to the evils of life! The day is not lighted up in vain, let it not pass without the practice of virtue; dare not to behold the everlasting sun go down, if thou hast wasted his light in idleness or in vanity: ignorance, misery, or want, will always afford thee the means of beneficence.

"May that immortal Being, whose eye is over all his creatures, save thee from folly and from vice! May his hand direct thee in the hour of negligence, and his spirit guide thee through the maze of error! When thy mind shall be enriched with the knowledge of his works, may he restore thee, more virtuous, to the valley of Irwan, to the arms of thy aged father! and may he forgive this tear, which proceeds not from a distrust of his providence, but falls for the loss of Solyman."

CHAPTER II.

THE morning was spread upon the mountains, and Solyman prepared to depart: but first prostrating himself towards the sun, he thus addressed that glorious luminary. "Incomparable and everlasting! thou, that lightest up a thousand worlds, and extendest thy protecting power to the minutest parts of nature! let thy universal eye look

with favour upon Solyman. When I wander over the wastes of desolation, may thy cheerful rays comfort and support me! when I go into the cities of men, mayest thou still look upon me; teach me to discover the dark designs of malignity, and to unfold the intricacies of fraud! So mayest thou rise with sevenfold lustre over the waves of Indus; so mayest thou be adored by those savage nations, who experience thy goodness without acknowledgment!" After this short address, he sang the following hymn:

HYMN TO THE RISING SUN.

From the red wave rising bright,
Lift on high thy golden head;
O'er the misty mountain, spread
Thy smiling rays of orient light!

See the golden god appear!
Flies the fiend of darkness drear;
Flies, and in her gloomy train,
Sable grief, and care, and pain!

See the golden god advance;
On Taurus' heights his coursers prance:
With him haste the vernal hours,
Breathing sweets and dropping flowers.

Laughing summer at his side,
Waves her locks in rosy pride;
And autumn bland, with aspect kind,
Bears his golden sheaf behind.

O haste, and spread the purple day
O'er all the wide ethereal way!
Nature mourns at thy delay:
God of glory, haste away;

From the red wave rising bright,
Lift on high thy golden head;
O'er the misty mountain, spread
Thy smiling rays of orient light!

When Solyman had finished his devotion, he passed over the Tigris into the kingdom of Persia.

There is some secret attraction in the place where we have passed the cheerful innocence of childhood, that holds our heart to it during the remaining part of life. No sooner had Solyman ascended an eminence that gave him a retrospective view of the valley of Irwan, than he turned his eye on his native fields, and gazed for some time with a kind of pensive complacency. "Happy, scenes," said he, "where I have beheld the everlasting sun so often rise and set! Yonder is the grove, where I reposed at noon; and that is the hill, where I mused at eve. In yon mansion, I first drew the breath of heaven; and there, perhaps, Ardavan may yet be weeping for my departure."

The gentle heart of Solyman thus indulged itself a while, till the declining day called upon him to proceed.

CHAPTER III.

When he had reached the foot of Taurus, the shadows of evening fell from the mountains; he, therefore, sought to repose himself in the village of Abdat: but as he was advancing towards it, he was stopped by an exclamation of sorrow, that proceeded from an adjacent wood. As he was in hopes of relieving some distress, he scrupled not to draw near enough to listen; and soon discovered, that the persons he heard speaking, were

two lovers, who had stolen a secret interview before their final separation.

The heart of Solyman had never felt the passion of love; and he was, therefore, the more curious to see the effects of it. But how great was his astonishment when, as he approached the place from whence the voices came, he beheld the lover lying, in all the agonies of sorrow, at the feet of his weeping mistress! "Immortal Power!" said he, "I have been told, that love was the best of thy gifts: is this miserable, this painful sight a proof of it? Behold that wretched youth, how his heart labours and struggles under its oppression; while the amiable maiden, who seems to be the cause of his misery, hangs over him in tears and silence, as if incapable of relieving him. Heavens, what agonies! reason will be driven from her seat. Ha! nature gives place; he faints!"

Solyman perceiving his assistance was now become necessary, rushed into the thicket, and raised the unhappy lover from the earth. At length his senses returned; but his grief, which had before been so exquisitely violent, was changed into gloomy stupidity. Solyman, however, by the soothing sounds of pity, awoke his attention, and by gentle importunity drew from him the cause of his distress.

"Stranger!" said the youth, "whoever thou art, thine appearance entitles thee to regard, and the compassion thou hast shewn me merits my confidence. Thou now beholdest the most unhappy of men. That lady, at whose feet I so lately lay insensible, is the daughter of a mercenary wretch, who has sold her to the khan of Bukharia;

and to-morrow she is to be conveyed to him, without expostulation or reprieve."

"What!" replied Solyman, "is it possible, that any thing can induce a parent to make his child miserable! I was not ignorant of the depravity of man; but I thought the affections of nature could not have been overcome. Yet if it is so, can there be any obligation on the child, to take the portion of misery that her parent holds out to her? The obligation of children to parents, can only be founded in gratitude; and where no favour is shown, no gratitude can be due. It is impossible that, in any circumstances, you should be more miserable; but it is very possible, that you may be happier. Fly, while the moments of liberty remain: and let not those hearts which Heaven has formed for each other, be separated by man. The roof of Ardavan has always been a refuge to innocence in distress: I will myself conduct you to the valley of Irwan, where my father's venerable character, and the retired situation of his abode, will secure you from detection; and I shall rejoice to be the means of delivering you from misery."

This offer was too interesting to be refused. The lovers put themselves under the conduct of Solyman; and he now repassed the roads he had travelled by the light of the sun, with superior pleasure even in the gloom of night: so delightful is beneficence to the virtuous mind!

When the morning began to appear, they had reached the banks of the Tigris "It will not be necessary," said Solyman, "that I should attend you farther: yonder is the valley of Irwan, and the house of Ardavan. To know that you are unhappy, will be a sufficient motive for him to receive

you; and your story will procure you his protection. I will now take leave of you, because I would not again take leave of my father. Tell him, that I recommend you to his care; he will rejoice to hear that Solyman has been the means of your happiness: but tell him not, that I returned to the banks of the Tigris." Having thus parted with the lovers, he proceeded on his journey, and in five days arrived at Ispahan.

The beauty and magnificence of that extensive city engaged his attention for many days: he was now astonished at the stupendous effects of industry, and now delighted by the elegance of art. But by these, he thought himself rather amused, than instructed; and he perceived that day after day departed from him, without being distinguished either by the acquisition of knowledge, or the practice of virtue; he, therefore, frequented the places of public resort, and endeavoured to form such connexions as were most likely to promote both.

CHAPTER IV.

Among those whose conversation he found most instructive and entertaining, he was particularly fond of an English merchant, who had resided some time at Ispahan, and spoke the language of the country: the merchant also perceiving in Solyman a superior understanding, and a benevolent heart, was delighted with his company, and cultivated his friendship. They frequently met; and their conversation generally urning on the

manners and pursuits of men, they mutually gratified each other by accounts of their different countries.

"You," said Solyman, "have enjoyed the advantages which I am still to procure. You have seen many different parts of the world, and can form a collective idea of its inhabitants: your commercial engagements must have led you much into the interests and designs of men; and you must, consequently, be well acquainted with the prevailing propensities of the heart. But I should be particularly obliged to you for an account of your own country, of which I have yet had but an imperfect description."

"The difference of men," said the Merchant, "lies only in their complexion and manners; their principles are the same, in all ages, and in all climates; and self-interest is the prevailing principle, from Indus to the Thames. I am not, however, such a school philosopher, as to think that the whole human species should come under this conclusion: I have experienced the delights of friendship, and the consolations of benevolence, where interest was no motive; I have even known many, who have contributed to remove the miseries of their fellow-creatures, though by the diminution of their own fortune. That excellent, that truly useful spirit of munificence, in a particular manner characterizes my countrymen. Were you, my friend, in the metropolis of Great Britain, you would behold spacious edifices erected for helpless indigence; and find the same skill and care employed for the health and the lives of the poor, that the most affluent circumstances can procure for the rich.

"But munificence is not the only ornament that distinguishes my country: there too dwell liberty and justice; liberty, that, however strange it may seem to you, delights in the protection of a monarch; and justice, which he causes to be administered without partiality. The greatest bassa in Great Britain cannot invade either the life or the property of the meanest subject with impunity; he is equally obnoxious to the laws, and would suffer indiscriminately with the most obscure malefactor.

"This general security of property and life, excites an unwearied spirit of industry, and disperses the sons of commerce over the remotest regions of the earth. Hence, my friend, we visit the towers of Ispahan, and the gulfs of Bassora; our sails are stretched from the most distant islands of the Atlantic, to the shores of Japan; and London is supplied with all the luxuries of nature, and all the labours of art."

"You give me," said Solyman, "a very magnificent, and a very pleasing idea of your country. But will not commerce, as it enriches the people, corrupt their manners? Will unbounded affluence produce neither riot nor debauchery, vanity nor pride? The inhabitants of Great Britain may be more splendid and luxurious; but the dwellers in Mesopotamia are, perhaps, happier in proportion as they are more innocent: for Ardavan, my father, has frequently told me, that wealth corrupts the heart of man."

"All the good things of life," answered the Merchant, "are complicated with evils. If wealth be not desirable, because it may lead us into luxury. or inflame us with pride; no more would the san-

guine cheerfulness of health, lest it should betray us into licentiousness. There are, it is to be feared, many, whose manners are depraved by riches; but there are, likewise, many, who employ them in the diffusion of knowledge, or the relief of indigence."

"These," said Solyman, "are glorious ends; and would almost excite me to turn merchant, for the acquisition of wealth. But give me some account of the literature of your country."

"Of that" replied the Merchant, "I am scarce a competent judge, the greatest part of my time having been employed in commercial studies. I am not, however, wholly unacquainted with it; for I have always thought that a merchant should not neglect the accomplishments of a gentleman. The present state of literature in Great Britain will be best seen, by considering the performances of the learned in their respective classes. We have but few historians of real merit; either their style is slovenly and unharmonious, or their matter undigested and confused; they are either the tools of a faction, or the slaves of a bookseller. But I have had the pleasure of hearing, since I came to Ispahan, that the histories of England and Scotland, the two divisions of Great Britain, have lately been written with considerable spirit, accuracy, and elegance. As to the histories of other countries, which have been published in Great Britain, they are such mere compilations, that they deserve not to be called the labours of art."

"From this account of your historians," said Solyman, "I cannot entertain any great idea of them; but what are your orators?"—"As to rhetorical writings," answered the Merchant, "we have many that are truly excellent; spirited and

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elevated in sentiment, in language harmonious and correct: but the powers of composition are rendered inefficacious by a spiritless pronunciation, The art of public speaking, however important in itself, seems entirely to be neglected; and the orator pronounces his discourse from the rostrum, with as little feeling himself, and as little influence upon his audience, as if he were reading the newspaper of the day."—"Then, I suppose," said Solyman, "that your orators speak on unaffecting, or uninteresting subjects."—"That is not the case," replied the Merchant; "the subjects they treat are of the last importance, the duties we owe the Supreme Being, the dispensations of his providence, the eternal obligations of morality, the charms of virtue, and the delightful exercises of justice, mercy, and charity." "Holy Mithra!" interrupted Solyman, "can the speakers be unaffected, while they are treating these subjects? Do they then think them of that importance they really are; or do your teachers disbelieve and disregard their own doctrines; or are they unconcerned what effect they may have upon the people?" —"It would be uncharitable," said the Merchant, "to admit generally any of these suppositions. Their unanimated and unawakened manner of speaking, may proceed from innocent causes, which those you mention are not."

"I take it for granted," said Solyman, "that as you have orators, at least in point of composition, you have also poets: for rhetoric and poetry are nearly allied. Besides, I have been informed, that every country has its poets; and that even on the frozen mountains of the north, the hardy inhabitants open their mouths to sing."—"The love of

harmony," replied the Merchant, "is in man a natural passion. There is something metrical and numerous in his motions, his actions, and his words; and he has always endeavoured to reduce the last to a kind of poetical measure, even where the art of writing was unknown or unpractised. The art of poetry in Great Britain has, of late years, been brought to great perfection: the language of the country is both nervous and harmonious, and calculated to express the tender and the sublime: in both which species of writing we have poets that have never been excelled. Though the English are, in general, of a less sprightly turn than their neighbours, the French; yet, in the active powers of imagination, in the flights of fancy, and the strains of humour, their writings are by no means inferior. Hence, the English poetry is not only harmonious, but sentimental and picturesque, abounding with strong images and lively description. In short, my countrymen have attempted every different species of poetry, and have excelled in each."

"The account you give me of your poetry," said Solyman, "makes me very desirous to learn your language. There is no species of writing that gives me equal pleasure: I caught the enthusiasm from nature, from the harmony and symmetry of her works. If you, who have so long been accustomed to the elegance of the English can bear a specimen of the Mesopotamian poetry, I will repeat to you a performance of my own."

A FAREWELL HYMN TO THE VALLEY OF IRWAN.

Farewell to the fields of Irwan's vale,
My infant years where fancy led;
And sooth'd me with the western gale,
Her wild dreams waving round my head;
While the blithe blackbird told his tale.
Farewell, the fields of Irwan's vale!

The primrose on the valley's side,
The green thyme on the mountain's head,
The wanton rose, the daisy pied,
The wilding's blossom blushing red,
No longer I their sweets inhale.
Farewell, the fields of Irwan's vale!

How oft, within yon vacant shade,
Has ev'ning clos'd my careless eye!
How oft, along those banks, I've stray'd,
And watch'd the wave that wander'd by!
Full long their loss shall I bewail.
Farewell, the fields of Irwan's vale!

Yet still, within yon vacant grove,
To mark the close of parting day;
Along yon flow'ry banks to rove,
And watch the wave that winds away;
Fair fancy sure shall never fail,
Though far from these, and Irwan's vale!

CHAPTER V.

In this social intercourse the Merchant passed many days with Solyman, and while he gratified

his curiosity engaged his affections. Being suddenly called by business to the court of Bassora, he came one morning to take a final leave: but the traveller was too much attached to his friend, to suffer any thing but necessity to part them. "Permit me," said he, "to attend you on your present expedition. I have not appointed to myself any particular route, but travel as occasion or inclination leads me; and I am sensible I shall gain more from your experience and observation, than I can from my own." This offer was too agreeable to the Merchant, not to be eagerly embraced: and after the necessary preparations they set out from Ispahan, and met the morning on the mountains of Arvan.

The sun appeared above the horizon, and Solyman prostrated himself in the profoundest adoration. When he arose from his devotions, he advanced towards his fellow-traveller, with a look of kindness mixed with pity and concern. The Merchant understood him: but as he was unwilling to controvert the principles of his religion, he made no apology for his conduct during the devotions of Solyman.

The mild morning light which was diffused over the valleys and streams, the various beauty of the meadows, the regular disposition of blossomed hedgerows, the soothing murmur of bees at their early labour, and the full concert of the feathered creation, drew their conversation on the universal beneficence of nature. "I feel," said Solyman, "a delight, which I can neither account for nor describe. These mountains gilded with the rays of the orient sun, those painted valleys that shame the rich carpets of Persia, yon distant waters,

which gleam with the shifting effulgence of light, the general busy voice of joy and activity in the animal creation, conspire to fill my heart with inexpressible pleasure."

"That pleasure," replied the Merchant, "I believe proceeds from sympathy: it is scarce possible, unless you have some peculiar cause of misery, not to be pleased when you see every thing around you happy. On the contrary, if you go into the mansions of sorrow, it will be impossible to withstand the infection of it. The God of nature seems to have given us these sympathetic feelings to link our affections in the great chain of society: hence, social virtue is not left to depend solely on the moral will, but is founded on the principles of our nature.

"But the object of your adoration is so profuse of his favours, that I should now be glad to find some convenient shade. I think I discover a cave on the southern declivity of the mountain; let us retire to it, during the heat of the day."

As they were advancing towards the cave, they perceived a beaten path leading directly from it to a distant rivulet: this made them apprehensive that it might be the habitation of some wild beast that had worn the path by constantly going to drink at the stream: but their fears were soon removed upon the appearance of an aged hermit, advancing slowly towards the rivulet with an earthen pitcher. At sight of the travellers, he hastened to his abode with all the feeble precipitancy of age: they agreed not to disturb him, and only took the advantage of the rock, which projected over his cell, to shelter themselves from the sun; but they had not long continued in this situation, before

the hermit, perceiving them to be inoffensive travellers, invited them into his cave."

"You will excuse," said the hoary sage, "the caution of years: these mountains are not secure from the ravage of human ferocity; and these gray hairs would be no defence from the wanton cruelty of man. I have suffered so much from my own species, that I have at last forsaken their society: I thought it better to give up the conveniences of it, than to bear the evils: and I have long lived in this solitary cave, on nothing more than what uncultivated nature would afford me."—"Those sufferings," said Solyman, "must indeed have been extraordinary, that could make you give up one of the greatest advantages of life, the social intercourse of your fellow-creatures."—"The narratives of age," replied the hermit, "are seldom agreeable to youth: but as instruction can be gained only from experience, you will do wisely to learn it from the misfortunes of Abbas.

"I was born to a competent fortune in the province of Lurestan: but, being early left an orphan, my affairs came under the cognizance of a justiciary court, which the members of it call the court of equity; but so equitable were they with regard to me, that they claimed two parts of my little fortune for their care of the third.—"Would to God, that were never the case in Great Britain!" interrupted the Merchant. "But proceed."—"Though I had such an early and convincing proof of the treachery and rapacity of mankind; yet, as I had always exercised the benevolent virtues myself, I could not think others totally devoid of them: and at my three-and-twentieth year, being inclined to travel, I without scruple,

intrusted the remains of my fortune with a person, whom I had long known and respected; a person, holy Allah! who lifted his hands to thee: but I had not been absent from Lurestan more than three moons, when he pretended a commission to dispose of my effects, and immediately left the place. Upon my return therefore to the province, I found neither friend nor fortune; and, being bred to no business, I was reduced to the most distressful state of indigence. I applied, however, not without hopes of redress or relief, to a person of power and eminence, whom I had often heard speak of his friendship with my father. After long and frequent attendance I was admitted to an interview: I laid open my distress to him with that kind of eloquence which the miseries we suffer from the treachery of others always suggests; and which, however unaffecting it may be to indifferent persons, utters its complaints with dignity and resentment. I was heard half way through my story, and dismissed with the following reply: 'It is not necessary, young man, to proceed with your complaints; I perceive you have been abused, and I am sorry for you. But that shall not be the only proof of my regard for you; I will give you a little advice: you should never depend so much on the benevolence or integrity of any human being, as to trust him with your fortune or your life.' —Thus ended my hopes from the friend of my father, whose benevolence extended no farther, than to instruct me how to secure the fortune that was stolen, and to preserve the life which I wished to lose.

"I had now no choice, but to enter, as a common soldier, into the army of the sophi. I had

always delighted in martial exercises, and was expert in the use of arms: my dexterity and address drew upon me the attention of my officers; and, in a short time, I obtained a small commission. I had now almost forgot my miseries, and embraced my new situation with cheerfulness and hope: but fortune, who had for a while ceased to persecute me as below her notice, as if she had been indignant at my satisfaction, and jealous of my prospects, now renewed and redoubled her severity.

"My commanding officer had a daughter of extraordinary beauty, and an uncommon capacity. Zara was the object of universal admiration: but she had set her heart on the unfortunate Abbas. The first moment I beheld her, I discovered in her looks the most tender and affectionate regard for me, from which I imputed to her compassion for my misfortunes; though at the same time I wished, without knowing why, that it might proceed from another cause. She asked me for the story of my life: I told it in the plainest and most pathetic manner; yet, when I had finished, she desired me to repeat it. From this moment I had done with peace: her infectious tenderness had such an influence upon my heart, that I could think of nothing but Zara: without Zara I was miserable. A thousand times did I flatter myself, that there was something more than mere compassion in her look and manner; and not many days had passed, before I was convinced of the dear fatal truth from this letter:

"'TO ABBAS.

"'Your merit and your sufferings have a claim

to something more than compassion: to espouse the cause of Abbas, is to discharge a duty which virtue cannot dispense with. Meet me on the parade this evening, and you shall know more of the sentiments of Zara.'

"The emotions I felt on the receipt of this letter can only be conceived by those, who, in the midst of despairing love, have beheld a gleam of hope. The tumult of my heart hurried me to the place appointed, long before the time: I walked backward and forward in the utmost confusion, totally regardless of every object about me; sometimes raising my hands and eyes in the sudden effusions of transport, sometimes smiling with the complacency of delight.

"At length the day departed, and Zara came. My heart bounded at her sight: I was unable to speak, and threw myself at her feet. She was alarmed at my excessive earnestness and confusion; but commanding me to rise, 'Abbas,' said she, 'if your confusion proceeds from your modest gratitude, restrain it, till you find whether I am able to serve you; if it arise from any other cause, I must leave you this moment.' I entreated she would tell me, to what I was indebted for the happiness of this interview, and I would be calm and attentive. 'My regard for your merit, and my compassion for your sufferings,' said she, 'make me wish to serve you. Tell me, Abbas, can I assist you through the interest of my father?' I faltered out my acknowledgments; telling her, that to her I must owe all my hopes of future happiness.

"She left me immediately without reply. The

singularity of my behaviour on the parade before the coming of Zara, had drawn upon me the attention of an officer who was secretly her admirer, and who, either through curiosity or suspicion, though unobserved by me, had waited at a convenient distance to watch my motions. No sooner did he perceive the approach of Zara, than as well to gratify his revenge, as to ingratiate himself with her father, he immediately told him of our interview.

CHAPTER VI.

"ZARA, ignorant of what had passed, with her usual freedom and good nature, began to express her compassion for the misfortunes of Abbas, talked of his merits, and wished to see him preferred. The old general, who was naturally jealous and impetuous, exclaimed with a burst of indignation, 'Yes, I shall prefer him!' Early the next morning he sent me my discharge; and while I was gazing in stupid astonishment upon my general's letter, a youth, masked, brought me a small casket, with a letter from Zara, which, to the best of my remembrance, was as follows:

"'TO ABBAS.

"'By some unlucky circumstance, which I do not now understand, instead of promoting you, I have been the cause of your dismission. The bearer, who brings you a small casket of jewels for your support, has my commands to conduct you the shortest way over the mountains: follow

him immediately, lest the rage of jealousy meditate new persecutions. He wears a mask that he may not be taken notice of as one of the general's domestics: his attachment to me will make him faithful to you. Time may bring about happier events.

'Adieu, adieu! 'ZARA.'

"In the anguish and confusion of my heart, I followed my guide, without knowing whither he was leading me, or what I was about to do. I vented my grief in broken ejaculations, frequently calling upon the name of Zara, but not once addressing myself to my attendant. By the evening of the second day, we had advanced forty miles southward from the province of Lurestan; when—how shall I relate the last horrid scene of my miseries! —pardon me!—these aged eyes have yet a tear left, yet a tear for the memory of Zara!—we were attacked by a band of robbers. My guide was Zara! In her fright, she threw off her mask, and cried, Zara! Love, rage, fear, and vengeance, gave me supernatural strength: three of the villains fell by my sabre; a fourth disarmed me; and the rest of the gang carried off Zara."

At this crisis of his story, the spirits of the aged hermit were exhausted by their own violence; and it was some time before he could proceed.

"You have now," continued he, "heard the completion of my misfortune. When I was recovered of the wounds I had received, I spent some months in a fruitless search of Zara: at last, despairing to gain any intelligence of her, I transmitted an account of the affair to her father, not without hope, that his power, or his wealth

might be the means of finding her out, and re deeming her: but I was deceived; and had soon the mortification to hear, that the unnatural wretch exulted in our misfortunes, and uttered the most dreadful imprecations on his only child.

"Deprived of hope, and dejected with melancholy, I could no longer bear the society of mankind. I, therefore, betook myself to these solitary mountains, where this cell has been my habitation for years, that have passed away in unvaried sorrow; and where you are the first of human beings that have heard me tell my tale."

CHAPTER VII.

SOLYMAN expatiated on the sufferings of Abbas with the most tender sensibility, and inveighed against the baseness of mankind with all the rage of honest resentment. "Surely," said he to the Merchant, "man is the vilest of all creatures! In proportion as he excels them in reason, he exceeds them in the ability to do mischief; and being equally cruel, the mischief he does renders him more detestable. Sacred Mithra! why dost thou lend thy light to the villain and the tyrant? Were it not for the enjoyment of your company, my friend, I should have few inducements to go farther from the valley of Irwan; for possibly to see more of human life, is only to know more crimes and miseries."

"From the complicated distresses of one person," replied the Merchant, "you draw a partial

image of the life of man. But the day declines: let us hasten over these mountains, that we may repose at night in some village of the valley." The travellers took leave of the hermit; and about the close of day arrived at the village of Arden.

At their entrance, they were met by a person of a plain dress, and a cheerful countenance, who, without ceremony, invited them as travellers to partake of his house and table that night. They accepted his invitation; and the Merchant addressing himself to Solyman, said, "From the family of this man, you shall not only be convinced that there is both happiness and virtue in human life; but you shall see also, how much the former depends upon the latter. I have been entertained by him, in travelling this way before: he is never more happy than when he has an opportunity of gratifying his benevolence. His inheritance being much lessened by the losses of his father, who was a merchant, he has but little wealth, except what arises from the industrious cultivation of a farm, which he purchased ten years ago with the chief part of his fortune; yet he is as liberal to the poor and the stranger, as if he had large possessions: his known hospitality and generosity, make his house the resort of the traveller and the indigent; and, after he has finished the labours of the day, he is always ready to entertain the one, and relieve the other; hence that serene and easy cheerfulness which you see in his countenance. In his family you behold the influence of a good example: his wife, whom he loves, and by whom he is beloved with the most cordial sincerity, goes hand in hand with him, not only through their natural cares, but also in

the exercises of benevolence. It is the principle of her economy, that domestic frugality is the support of liberality; and she dispenses her own and her husband's bounties, with that propriety and easy cheerfulness, which double their value to the receiver. The children inherit the benevolence of their parents, and learn the exercise of it from their example. By and by they will crowd about your sofa solicitous to serve you: you shall see them preventing your wants, and watching your requests, with a busy emulation which shall do you the most services."

Solyman listened with delight to this description of the villager's family; and hastened, with the most ardent curiosity, to behold that virtue he so much admired; when he found that every thing exceeded the Merchant's account, and his own expectation. "It is enough," he said, "I am again reconciled to my own species. Notwithstanding the impression I received from the story of the unfortunate Abbas, virtue has yet her temples among men; but surely, she is a villager, and her votaries are the inhabitants of the fields!" Full of these thoughts, and delighted with the family of his host, he retired to his chamber; and, before he slept, composed the following ode:

THE HAPPY VILLAGER.

VIRTUE dwells in Arden's vale:
There her hallow'd temples rise;
There her incense greets the skies,
Grateful as the morning gale!

There, with humble peace, and her,
Lives the happy Villager;
There the golden smiles of morn
Brighter every field adorn;

There the sun's declining ray
Fairer paints the parting day:
There the woodlark louder sings,
Zephyr moves on softer wings,
Groves in greener honours rise,
Purer azure spreads the skies;
There the fountains clearer flow,
Flowers in brighter beauty blow;
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy Villager!

Distant still from Arden's vale
Are the woes the bad bewail;
Distant fell remorse, and pain,
And frenzy smiling o'er her chain!
Grief's quick pang, despair's dead groan,
Are in Arden's vale unknown:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy Villager!

In his hospitable cell,
Love, and truth, and freedom dwell;
And, with aspect mild and free,
The graceful nymph, Simplicity.
Hail, ye liberal graces, hail!
Natives all of Arden's vale:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy Villager!

CHAPTER VIII.

When the dawn of the morning broke, Solyman and the Merchant, with the most grateful acknowledgments of the hospitality with which they had been entertained, left the village of Arden, followed by the kind wishes of their host and his amiable family. They travelled for some days through the southern provinces of Persia, without

any remarkable occurrence, or any other entertainment, than such as could be found in the diversity of prospects, and the different labours of men. Sometimes they amused themselvse with the contemplation of those places, which history had marked out, as the scenes of great events; and sometimes had occasion to reflect on the perishable monuments of human magnificence.

The noble plain, on which stood the once glorious Persepolis, afforded them inexhaustible matter of curiosity and meditation: this plain, extending about nineteen leagues, abounds every where with villages, and is watered by the great river Araxes. Nature has been so industrious in the defence of it, that she has raised before it mountains, that bear all the appearance, and might answer the end of artificial fortifications. From hence the travellers were amused with the ruinous remains of many noble edifices, that had once adorned the range of mountains: but when they were come to that part of them, which covered the ancient palace of Persepolis, the stupendous ruin struck them with silent astonishment. Porticos, which had withstood the assault of time more than two thousand years; broken columns of different lengths, rising at considerable distances within the limits of the said pile; sculptured portals, through whose frowning arches the wind passed with hollow murmuring; numberless figures engraven on the pilasters of those portals; and multitudes of hieroglyphics on the different parts of the spacious ruin; gave the travellers a mournful and magnificent idea of the pristine grandeur of this edifice.

The Merchant observing Solyman to be totally

absorbed in thought, would not interrupt the melancholy pleasure of his contemplations; but waited, in silence, till, with an air of unaffected concern, he thus expressed his sentiments on Persepolis.

"I am at a loss, my friend, in the midst of these magnificent ruins, whether I should think more highly, or more meanly of mankind. Pride raised this lofty edifice, and pride destroyed it. The vanity of a Cyrus, a Darius, or a Xerxes, adorned those superb columns; and the vanity of an Alexander defaced them. These domes were not reared solely for regal magnificence and security; but to aid the appetites of power and luxury, and to secrete the royal pleasures from those that toiled to gratify them. Thus as this noble structure was possibly raised, not only for vanity but for riot; so, probably, by vanity inflamed by riot, it fell: probably, at the request of a smiling harlot, the towers of Persepolis blazed for her diversion: probably, because the conqueror had taken too large a draught of wine, this palace, the glory of eastern art, sunk to the ground: a striking instance of the vanity of human labours, and the depravity of human nature! On the other hand, while I consider the work of the artist; while I am delighted with the symmetry and proportion, which is yet to be traced through these maimed ruins, and struck with the bold relief of the ancient Persian architecture; I forget the motives, both of the erection and demolition of Persepolis; and admire the industry and ingenuity of man, that gave such grace and beauty to these massy structures."

"Your sentiments," said the Merchant, "are

much the same with my own; but give me leave now to conduct you to a mountain, about two leagues distant from these ruins, and situated between two of the most beautiful plains in the world. This mountain consists of one entire rock, capable of the most exquisite polish: it is reduced to form by art, and its sides are perpendicular: so that, at a distance, it has the appearance of a wall. Upon this rock are several pieces of bass-relief, exquisitely performed; in one of which is represented, a combat between the king of Persia and the king of the Indies; the latter of whom, according to the tradition of the times, was subdued. There are, besides, many other figures, of which, though you may not discover the design, you will be pleased with the execution."

Solyman proceeded with his friend to the mountain, much delighted, as well with the extraordinary appearance of the rock, as the uncommon beauty of the plains that were spread on either hand beneath, interspersed with villas shaded by trees, extensive meadows, and pastures filled with flocks. When they had gratified their curiosity, and indulged their speculations, they proceeded on their journey, and in a short time arrived at the gulf of Bassora.

The Merchant, having here found the vessel he expected, told Solyman, that if his inclination led him to Europe, he could accommodate him with a convenient passage; informing him, at the same time, that his own affairs would detain him some years longer in Persia. Solyman, whose heart was firmly attached to the Merchant, long hesitated between friendship and curiosity: however, as he must have parted with him had he continued

his travels in Asia, and was not totally without hopes of seeing him in what he called the new world, he determined to accept his offer.

CHAPTER IX.

As the ship was to remain some time in the gulf, Solyman took the opportunity to make the tour of India. In his way he visited the isle of Ormus, than which no part of nature wears a more dismal appearance. Excepting a few houses, which make the capital of the place, the whole looks like a heath blasted by lightning, or burnt up by design: yet here, in this scene of dreary desolation, Solyman had the mortification to meet with an exile from the city of Ispahan.

"Surely," said he to the unhappy man, "you must have been so unfortunate as to commit some enormous crime, condemned as you are to this miserable abode!"

"Stranger," replied the exile, "I have been unfortunate but not unjust. One day, being at the Persian court, I told a gentleman who stood near me, in a low whisper, that I thought the Sultana Moratte extremely beautiful. This was my crime: and it was the decree of imperial justice, that for this I should wear out the remains of life in this dreary solitude."

"Heavens!" said Solyman, "what madness must possess mankind, to lodge unlimited power in the hands of any one human being! When the decrees of justice must be issued by numbers united, there are many means of restraining partial or illegal sentences: self-interest, revenge,

envy, and every other cause of perverting justice, would then operate feebly, when opposed by public shame, divided interests, and the open appearance of equity. But what comfort can you receive from useless declamation? I can help you to the means of deliverance from this wretched prison; and I think you are restrained by no principle of duty from embracing them; for it is impossible, that divine power should enforce obedience to the decrees of injustice. I am now about to travel through India; at my return, I will again visit Ormus and you; and if you shall be inclined to exchange your prison for the spacious kingdoms of Europe, I will procure you a passage thither."

The Exile heard these words with inconceivable transport; he threw himself at the feet of Solyman, and expressed his delight in one emphatical word, crying out, "Liberty, liberty!" The pleasure of the traveller was scarce inferior to that of the Exile. "Surely," said he to himself, "the diffusion of happiness is the highest bliss that the human heart is capable of? I feel more delight in the hope of defeating the malice of injurious power, than in any thing I have ever met with, either before or since the beginning of my travels."

CHAPTER X.

SOLYMAN now left Ormus, and proceeded towards the frontiers of India. Though the country lies nearly in the same climate with the southern provinces of Persia, yet the aspect of it is different;

and it is furnished with other kinds of plants and animals, as well as with people of a different complexion, and different manners: indeed, nature seems to have made the intercourse of distant nations necessary, by supplying each with some peculiar conveniences.

Solyman passed not through the provinces of the mogul's empire, without instruction, as well as amusement. He was skilled in the natural history of plants and animals; and he found here abundant opportunity to exercise that kind of knowledge. He was often amused by observing how nearly brutal sense borders upon human reason, in the reflecting sagacity of the elephant, and the adroit mischief of the baboon.

Small, however, in comparison, was the pleasure he received from the natural rarities of India, to that which the excellent administration of justice in the several provinces afforded him. The police of that country appeared to him most wisely calculated for the preservation of peace and property; the magistrates that were appointed to administer justice in their several districts, being obliged to keep persons continually employed to watch the dealings of commerce, and attend both to public and private transactions; for the iniquity of which themselves were to be accountable, and the emperor might always be appealed to.

But when he came to Dehli, the capital of the mogul's empire, his opinion of the Indian policy was much altered. He there had the mortification to find a ministry of wives, and a court of concubines, at whose direction the principal posts in the civil and military establishments were usually disposed of: and he who was most recom-

mended by his person and address, was sure to obtain the highest office in the legislature or the army. To find that the bands of music at court consisted only of women, gave him no disgust: "There," said the traveller, "the ladies are in their proper sphere. Let them cultivate all the soft and engaging graces; let them employ themselves in the embellishments of art, and the excursions of fancy: but let them not interfere in the important concerns of government; nor raise those to the places of power, whose accomplishments are suited only to their taste,"

As Solyman was displeased with the caballing arts of the Indian ladies, so he was shocked at their inhuman and unnatural superstition. With horror and amazement he sometimes beheld a woman, in the bloom of life and beauty, rush into the flames, to accompany the manes of her dead husband: and if nature shuddered at the thought of this dreadful sacrifice, or female softness shrunk into fear or irresolution, he beheld a number of diabolical priests, with execrable screams and faces of horror, pushing forward the poor trembling reluctant woman to the burning pile. "Eternal Mithra!" said the afflicted youth, "what havoc does superstition make among thy works? when once that fiend enters the human heart, nature and reason are driven out; their sacred lights are wholly extinguished: truth and humanity are trampled upon; and the detested fury leads her infatuated votaries, through the horrors of darkness, into the arms of death!"

CHAPTER XI.

SOLYMAN was the more affected by this infernal custom, as he feared it might one day be the fate of a lady, with whom he had contracted an intimate friendship, and for whom he had the most tender regard. This amiable person was a native of Dehli, and her name Almena. As the houses in which they lodged were contiguous, she first drew his attention by her music, which was her favourite employment, and in which she was greatly skilled. Solyman had a taste for all the fine arts; and after the inquiries and observations of the day, he felt an irresistible pleasure, in listening, from his portico, to the evening music of Almena. His heart soon became prejudiced in favour of a lady, who had afforded him so much entertainment; and he wished for nothing more than an opportunity of expressing his gratitude.

It was usual for Almena to take a morning walk in the suburbs of Dehli. Solyman observed this; and introduced himself to her conversation, by paying his acknowledgments. There is some secret attraction in congenial natures, which draws them together, without the forms of a long acquaintance. Solyman was soon convinced, that he discovered in Almena a disposition perfectly suited to his own: her conversation was the picture of a mind enlarged by virtue, and enlightened by learning: she had none of the trifling follies or the insignificant levity of her sex; yet her manner was animated and cheerful: she had no ebullitions of giddy wit; but her language was the

clear and natural image of polished sense, and unaffected knowledge. Solyman left no means unattempted to cultivate a friendship that promised so much felicity. He constantly attended Almena on her morning walk; and at every interview, entertained some new sentiments in her favour. Her heart was not less benevolent than his own. "You have seen, my friend," said she, "almost every thing in Dehli, that is worth the attention of a stranger: but I suppose you do not make it your business, as a traveller, merely to attend to what is uncommon or magnificent, nor merely to explore the different operations of nature, and manners of men. Travel must afford you many opportunities to relieve the indigent, to comfort the afflicted, to inform the ignorant, or rescue the oppressed. Within the compass of my morning walk there is a village, the inhabitants of which I call my people; they are all poor: to those that are able to labour, I propose rewards for the greatest industry; and those who are incapacitated by age or sickness, I take under my own protection."

It is easy to conceive how much Solyman would be delighted with this account of Almena. When he found that to all the elegant graces of female softness, she added the virtues of benevolence, his friendship for her was heightened into the most refined affection. On the other hand, her regard for Solyman increased in proportion as she became acquainted with his improved understanding and generous temper; for virtue loves her own image, wherever it is found.

CHAPTER XII.

SOLYMAN had now passed many days at Dehli, in this pleasing intercourse of friendship; happy to assist his Almena in the diffusion of happiness, charmed with her virtues, and delighted with her conversation. The time, however, approached, when he was to think of his expedition into Europe: but the friendship of Almena, bound to his heart by stronger ties than that which he had before contracted with the Merchant, overbalanced at once every thought of his voyage; he had, therefore, determined to remain at Dehli; when the poor Exile at Ormus came into his mind. He started at the thought, as he would have done at the ghost of Ardavan, "'Tis done," said he: "adieu to Almena; adieu to the dear delights of her friendship, if they must be purchased at the expense of virtue!"

There is no precept of human wisdom conceived to be of greater use, and, therefore, none more frequently urged, than that we should learn to avoid the evils of life, from the irregularities and misfortunes of others: yet, important as this precept may be, it is, like most others, universally neglected. We observe, indeed, the events of life; and inquire into their causes, with insatiable curiosity: but we seldom draw any conclusions for the direction of our own conduct; we hear or read only for amusement; and the story passes by, without leaving any traces of instruction.

Solyman, who, from the first setting out on his travels, had received the strongest convictions of

the distresses of love, without the least caution or resistance suffered that passion to make its inroads under the appearance of friendship; and he now felt all the anguish, which he had before been a witness to near the village of Abdat. Not once, however, did he hesitate between love and virtue: the torrent of his grief for the loss of Almena, violent as it was, could not bear down his determined integrity.

With a heart full of the most piercing sorrow, he went to take leave of his beloved friend; he resolved, nevertheless, to explain the cause of his departure with the most serene indifference, determined not to affect his Almena by the appearance of sorrow; he resolved—and threw himself at her feet in speechless anguish.

Almena beheld his grief, with united sorrow and surprise; and, with tears that flowed from pity and friendship, entreated him to discover the cause of his distress. "It is in vain, Almena," said he; "it is in vain, any longer to hide my heart from you: nor, indeed, should I act the part of friendship, to dissemble its feelings. I, who was yesterday the happiest of mankind in the enjoyment of your conversation, am now the most miserable. By the indispensable laws of honour and humanity, I am called from Dehli, but, alas! by the love of Almena, I am induced to stay. I know, my friend, there is no alternative: but that knowledge is my misery. I go, then, from you and from happiness; perhaps, never more to enjoy either: but when I am far from you, it will be some consolation to believe, that you will remember the love and the truth of Solyman."

Almena, as well as the emotions of her heart

would give her leave, replied—"Go, my friend, go, where your virtue leads you; and Providence be your guide! Your friendship, while I have life, shall not be forgotten: no; Almena shall always respect your memory, and love you with the same affection as she does the dearest of her friends."

A flood of tears followed these words; and Solyman, unable any longer to behold her sorrow, precipitately withdrew.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEPRIVED of that serenity which ever waits on conscious virtue, when free from the great calamities of life, the innocent, the once happy Solyman was now become the child of affliction. He repassed the provinces of India in deep melancholy, unaffected by every thing that might excite curiosity, or exercise speculation. But, behold the power of virtue! and be convinced, whoever thou art that readest this story, that there is nothing equally capable of alleviating the afflictions which are incident to human life."

When he arrived at Ormus, and beheld the joy of the poor Exile at the sight of his deliverer, he felt a torrent of pleasure in his breast, overflowing all the oppositions that grief had raised against it. "Oh that Almena," said he, "were present! that I could communicate to her the happiness I feel, in rescuing this poor Persian from the oppression of tyranny! how would her gentle heart rejoice, and indulge itself, with Solyman, in the delights

of benevolence? Fate has been severe in dividing those, whose souls were made for each other; but it has left me this happiness, and I enjoy it.

Solyman was now about to apply to his friend the Merchant, who was still upon the coast, to procure a passage for the Exile: but he could not resist the desire of writing immediately to Almena: and from Ormus he sent the following letter:—

"TO ALMENA.

"Shall Solyman be pardoned, if he intrude once more on the quiet of Almena? Dearest, best of women! I come not to wound thy gentle heart with my complaints: you shall not be told what I have suffered since my departure: no, Almena! you shall only know what I have enjoyed. The poor Exile, whom I mentioned to you at Dehli, is still in Ormus. When he perceived me from the rocks, on which he used to wander daily to watch my coming, he flew towards me in an ecstasy of joy, crying out, 'Liberty! my deliverer! liberty!' Here was a scene, my friend, that might have overbalanced every thing, but the loss of your company. For that, Almena—forgive me—for that, I must yet shed a tear. Adieu!

"SOLYMAN."

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER the dismisson of this letter, he went immediately to visit the Merchant, who received him with the warmest expressions of friendship.

"Welcome," said he, "my valuable friend! whose uncommon virtues have made you devote the pleasurable season of life to the acquisition of knowledge, and the distribution of happiness."

"For the latter of these purposes," said Solyman, "I now wait upon you. In the isle of Ormus is an unhappy Persian, whom the capricious cruelty of his prince has condemned to perpetual exile in that dismal prison. Were he a criminal justice should have its course; I might then have beheld him with pity, but should not have meditated his deliverance: but he is innocent, my friend, he is innocent, and suffers. Cannot you assist me to make his escape? Cannot he have a passage to Europe, which you obligingly offered me?"

"To facilitate the escape of an exile," replied the Merchant, "were as much as my interest and safety are worth in Persia. I must not be concerned in it: but I will introduce you to the captain of a ship, and engage him to serve you in every thing you shall desire: after which, if you can take the Exile along with you in disguise, or by any other means, as your friend or attendant, perhaps he may escape without much difficulty or danger. I have despatched my business on the coast, and am obliged to return to Ispahan; let us now, therefore, if you please, wait upon the captain."

Solyman, as he had been in hopes of procuring the Exile a passage without going himself into Europe, from which the friendship of Almena had weaned his inclinations, was somewhat embarrassed by this account. However, as he was determined at all events to deliver the poor Persian, he went immediately to the apartments of

the captain, to whom the Merchant recommended him as a particular friend, who wanted to make the tour of Europe. The captain received them with the freedom and cheerfulness peculiar to his station, and promised Solyman the best accommodations of his ship; but told him, that she must remain there a few months before she could get out of the gulf.

Of this delay, though not answerable to his impatient wishes for the deliverance of the Exile, Solyman resolved to make use, in visiting his father and the valley of Irwan. As soon, therefore, as he had acquainted the Exile with what he had to hope, and advised him to provide secretly for his voyage, and his subsistence in a distant country, he sailed from the gulf up the Euphrates, as far as where the Tigris empties itself into that river, and from thence proceeded by land to the valley of Irwan.

CHAPTER XV.

THE venerable Ardavan had ascended an eminence near his house, to enjoy the beauties of the summer evening, and to offer up a prayer to the departing Sun for Solyman, when Solyman appeared before him.

What language can paint the emotions of paternal affection! The feeble remains of aged life twice fainted beneath the weight of joy. At length recovering, he cried, "It is enough—Solyman lives! Heaven has regarded the virtues of my son, and restored him to the arms of Ardavan."

Solyman was not less affected by this meeting; nor less delighted to find his aged parent still enjoying health and reason, in the decline of life. But his happiness was allayed with anxiety. He visited the favourite scenes of his native valley, in hopes of finding that delight, which he thought to be connected with the idea of them; but his imagination was still at Dehli. As love and melancholy are of the sisterhood of poetry, he had not been long in the valley before he wrote the following lines:

TO ALMENA.

FROM THE BANKS OF THE IRWAN.

Where trembling poplars shade their parent vale,
And tune to melody the mountain gale;
Where Irwan murmurs musically slow,
And breathing breezes through his osiers blow;
Friend of my heart, behold thy poet laid
In the dear silence of his native shade!
Ye sacred vales, where oft the muse, unseen,
Led my light steps along the moonlight green;
Ye scenes, where peace and fancy held their reign,
For ever lov'd, and once enjoy'd again!
Ah! where is now that nameless bliss refin'd;
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind?

As sweet, the wild rose bares its balmy breast;
As soon, the breeze with murmurs soothes to rest!
As smooth, the stream of silver Irwan flows;
As fair, each flower along his border blows:
Yet dwells not here that nameless bliss refin'd,
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind.
Is it that knowledge is allied to woe;
And are we happy, only ere we know?
Is it that hope withholds her golden ray,
That fancy's fairy-visions fade away?
Or can I, distant far from all that's dear,
Be happy only when Almena's near?

That truth, the feelings of my heart disclose :
Too dear the friendship for the friend's repose.

Thus mourn'd the muse, when, through his osiers wild,
The hill-born Irwan rais'd his head, and smil'd :
" Child of my hopes," he fondly cried, " forbear :
Nor let thy Irwan witness thy despair.
Has peace indeed forsook my flow'ry shore ?
Shall fame and hope and fancy charm no more ?
Though fame and hope in kindred air depart,
Yet fancy still should hold thee to her heart :
For, at thy birth, the village hind has seen
Her light wings waving o'er the shadowy green ;
With rosy wreaths she crown'd the new-born hours,
And rival fairies fill'd thy bed with flowers :
In vain—if grief shall waste thy blooming years,
And life dissolve in solitude and tears——"

Where are the delights of the valley of Irwan, where the flowery variety of its pastures and meadows, its hills that rose gradually to meet the morning sun, and its groves that spread their foliage to exclude the heats of mid-day? Wrapt in the gloom of pensive solitude, the son of Ardavan was now negligent of these, and of all that once delighted or amused him. In vain did his father desire a relation of his travels; and in vain did he begin it: when he attempted to speak of Persepolis, he gave a description of Dehli; when he was asked after some other place, he mentioned the village of Almena: instead of describing the people of India, he described the person of Almena; and when an account of their manners was requested, "Her manners," he replied, "are such, as the immortal Mithra looks down upon with delight."

CHAPTER XVI.

ARDAVAN was now no longer at a loss to account for the gloomy inconsistency of his son's behaviour: but, willing to be still more convinced of what he suspected to be the cause, he applied to his passions the story of those lovers whom he had recommended to his care. At the mention of the lovers, Solyman was roused from his melancholy negligence into the most eager attention. "Tell me, my father," said the impatient youth; "tell me, I entreat you, the fate of the lovers."

"I thank you," replied the sage, "for putting it in my power to assist the unfortunate. From your compassion for the sufferings of these lovers, and your attempt to alleviate them, you will feel more sensibly the power of the same consolation, when your own heart becomes a prey to the distresses of love."

Solyman discovered, by his emotions, the effect which this short preface had upon him.

"You know," continued Ardavan, "a small building which I erected some years ago for a retreat in the summer months: you remember its situation, in the depth of a spacious wood; which is only accessible by one narrow passage, to which I have provided a door, so beset with evergreens, that it is impossible for the most curious eye to perceive it: the canal of running water in the middle of the wood, and the beautiful grass plot, I have extended, since you left me, to the summer-house. To this place I conducted the lovers as soon as I had heard their story. There they continued

for some time, attended by one of my faithful domestics who supplied them with every necessary; and they were visited almost every day by myself. O, my son, how exquisite was the delight to behold the happiness of this innocent pair, and at the same time to consider myself as in some measure contributing to it! Surely this was to partake of the pleasure of the Deity, which we believe to consist in his universal power of removing evil and dispensing good!

"After some time I was informed that the khan of Bukharia, who had purchased the maiden of her father, was deposed and banished by the sophi. This gave us new hopes; and it was agreed that the youth should return to Abdat to learn the disposition of the unnatural parent. He accordingly went; and told him, that he would endeavour to find his daughter, upon condition he would consent to their marriage. The wretch, though he was no stranger to their mutual passion, insisted, that no man should ever have his daughter, who would not pay the same price for her which the khan of Bukharia had offered.

"As this price far exceeded the ability of the lover, he returned to Irwan, fallen from those pleasing hopes, which he had so lately formed, of enjoying at once his love and his liberty. The father, convinced that his daughter was in the possession of the young man, and not now without hopes of recovering her, and offering her again to sale, hired a set of ruffians to watch his return, and to extort from him a confession of the place where she was secreted. Of this design, however, he was timely apprized by an honest villager of Abdat to whom one of the ruffians had commu-

nicated their business; and he came off in disguise, and escaped their notice.

"About two months after, it was reported that the father had died of vexation for the disappointment of his avaricious views: I, therefore, despatched a servant to inquire into the truth of this report: and, finding it confirmed, conducted the lovers to Abdat without farther apprehension. The maiden, who was an only child, inherited her father's fortune, which was very considerable: but as great part of it had been amassed by oppression, she made restitution to those whom his avarice had injured, and she now enjoys the remainder with happiness and her lover."

"What you tell me," said Solyman, "gives me inexpressible satisfaction: for the lovers are possessed of eminent virtues; and to be instrumental to the happiness of virtuous lovers, is the most delightful task within the province of benevolence. Indeed those hearts only, that are generous and noble, can be capable of the tender sensibility of love: for the breast which harbours malignity and envy, can never feel the sympathetic tenderness, which is the very essence of that gentle passion."

"Your observation," replied the sage, "may be very just; and it is, therefore, the more necessary for those, to whom nature and the principles of a virtuous education have given the blessing of an open heart, to guard against the inroads of that passion: if there is no probability of an uninterrupted enjoyment of its object, they should look upon its advances, as of an evil that will destroy their peace. The pleasures of real love are, perhaps, the most refined, the most delicate and sen-

sible, of any that we are capable of enjoying: but, believe me, those are fortunate lovers, who are indemnified, by these, for the many uneasy hours, the restless anxieties, and the painful apprehensions they undergo."

In these general terms did Ardavan deliver his instructions to his son, who received them with a silent conviction of their truth and propriety; and immediately after this conversation, retired to offer up the following prayer to the Sun for Almena.

"Incomparable and everlasting! whose universal eye sees nothing fairer, nothing more virtuous than Almena; O let that eye look upon her with the vigilance of a parent. She most resembles thee in the continual exercise of beneficence: cherish, therefore, those virtues, that are congenial with thy own; and let the dear possessor, through thy benignant influence, enjoy the constant blessings of health and cheerfulness: but if some portion of sorrow be the birthright of every human being, immortal Mithra! may Almena only sigh for the absence of her friend."

CHAPTER XVII.

In such exercises did Solyman employ his retired hours, till the time approached for his return to Ormus. As he was determined, if possible, to avoid going into Europe, he made no mention of that circumstance to his father: his engagements to the Exile were a sufficient reason for his de-

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CHAPTER XVII.

In such exercises did Solyman employ his retired hours, till the time approached for his return to Ormus. As he was determined, if possible, to avoid going into Europe, he made no mention of that circumstance to his father: his engagements to the Exile were a sufficient reason for his de-

parture; and, in a short time, he arrived at the gulf, and waited upon the English captain, who was preparing for his voyage. Solyman informed him, that upon some interesting occasion he was obliged to relinquish his design of visiting Europe; but that he would recommend a Persian lady to his care, who was bound for England; and he begged that she might enjoy all the retirement her situation could afford. As no objection was made to this proposal, he privately purchased the habit of a Persian lady, which he concealed some days on the coast of Ormus; and, under favour of the night, he found no difficulty to procure a boat to the English vessel. In a few hours they got under sail; and having received repeated assurances of the captain's care, and engaged the good offices of his crew by a handsome gratuity, he procured a passage by sea to the coast of India.

The state of his heart was now very different from what it had been a few days before: he had discharged his engagements to the Exile, with all the success that he could wish; and his face was now set towards Dehli. On he travelled with the eager pace of a lover, and in a few days he reached the capital of the mogul's empire.

The evening he arrived, he flew to the house of Almena, who received him with emotions of tenderness which she was scarcely able to conceal. When the first salutations were passed, she asked him, how he had disposed of the Exile, and why he did not accompany him to Europe as he had promised. He informed her by what means he had procured the Exile's escape; adding, that from the letters he had written, if she had received them, she might at once see the reason

both of his rejecting the European voyage, and his return to Dehli.

"What would it have availed me," said he, "to have visited the distant regions of the universe? What pleasure or amusement could I have expected to find in Europe, when all my heart holds dear was still in Asia? Believe me, this place is now more than the whole world to me; and the friendship of Almena is the only pleasure I can enjoy."

"I have received your letters," said she, "and if they speak the language of your heart, I am no stranger to its feelings. To deal ingenuously with you, I am sensible of your merit, and admire your virtues: and, were I not more happy in my present condition, than I could hope to be in any other, I know not the man, with whom I would rather divide the enjoyments of life, than with Solyman."

"Is it possible, then," said Solyman, "that you can think the condition of celibacy happier than that of marriage? Undoubtedly, the principle happiness of mankind depends on the intercourse of society, and the connexions of friendship: marriage is nothing else but a state of friendship, in which the friends, by uniting their interests, have a constant and uninterrupted enjoyment of each other. Nature aids this union, and reason approves it: can any condition bid fairer for happiness, than that, in which the mutual delights of friendship can only be torn from us by the hand of death?"

"There may be some truth," answered she, "in what you observe: but there is an inconstancy in human nature, that makes it dangerous even for

two friends, to enter into any connexion that cannot be broken; and an unaccountable caprice, that makes us quarrel with our happiness, because we are sure of enjoying it."

"Were we deterred from every pursuit," said Solyman, "by the apprehension of those inconveniences which the foibles and frailties of our nature might bring upon us, we should never be either virtuous or happy, but might languish away our lives in solitary and unsocial indolence. To avoid the inconveniences of human inconstancy, marriage is, surely, the best institution in the world: for what could be more likely to fix the inconstant, than the habitual intercourse of kindness and good offices; than that gratitude, which is due to the long exercise of affectionate tenderness; and those dear pledges, which must depend for happiness and support on the unanimity of their parents?

"There is, indeed, an insuperable objection to your being married in India: I mean that contempt, or the horrid alternative of torture, which is entailed on the unhappy woman who survives her husband. But that objection shall vanish immediately," continued the lover, with a look of passionate earnestness: "let us go, my friend, let us go to love and happiness, in the valley of Irwan. That place, which so lately afforded a retreat to the lovers, whose distresses I have related to you, shall then become eternally sacred to love and friendship: that place, whose beautiful scenes I so lately beheld with indifference, I shall then visit with rapture. Ecstasy is in the thought! to enjoy, with Almena, the shades of Irwan; with her to walk in my native fields; with her to sit

down on the banks of my favourite stream; for her to pluck the flower, whose beauty may have drawn her attention: to lead her through those romantic scenes that delighted the innocent enthusiasm of my childhood; and to show her the more solitary retreats, which I sought when her friendship had first taught me to sigh!"

Thus Solyman poured out the natural passionate sensations of love; and Almena, whose heart was far from being indifferent to him, easily caught the enthusiasm. "To your honour, and your friendship," said she, "I can trust every thing. I am ready to attend you to those scenes, of which you have given me so lively a description: whether they may answer it or not, or whatever they may be, the friendship of Solyman will make them agreeable."

It is easier to conceive than to express the joy which the lover felt upon this declaration. Within a few days they set forward from Dehli, on their journey to the valley of Irwan; and, for the greater expedition, and the less fatigue, they determined to go by sea, and accordingly proceeded to the coast, where they went on board a trading vessel bound for the Persian gulf.

CHAPTER XVIII.

At that time there was war between two petty princes of the hither peninsula of India; and, unfortunately, the ship in which they embarked belonged to one of these powers. They had not pro-

ceeded above five leagues from the coast, when they were pursued by the foe. After an obstinate and bloody engagement, they were boarded; and their enemies, when they had stripped the vessel of every thing valuable, dismissed it.

They dismissed the vessel; but they took Almena! What heart does not bleed, what eye does not shed a tear, for the miserable Solyman? They dismissed the vessel; but they took Almena! Prayers, and tears, and agony, and anguish, were vain. The lover saw his dear, trembling, fainting maid, dragged by the hands of the unfeeling sailors into their own ship, after they had bound him to prevent the effects of his rage. "I ask not for your mercy," cried the wretched youth: "only take me into your vessel along with that lady, and prepare your tortures, your racks, and wheels; for me prepare them, and let me perish before these eyes lose sight of Almena!"

While Solyman was vainly uttering these pitiable exclamations, the enemy steered away, and was in a short time out of sight. The men of the ship in which he was, apprehensive of some bad consequences from the violence of his rage, were prudent enough to let him continue bound; while he now loaded them with the reproachful terms of slaves and cowards, and now excited them by promises, or entreated them by prayers, to pursue the foe. The ship having lost her freight, did not proceed on her intended voyage, but returned to the coast of India.

When they arrived, Solyman was informed, that the vessel which had taken them belonged to the king of Sundah, who at that time was at war with the king of Kanara. Upon this information, as

soon as he had received intelligence of the situation of the kingdom of Sundah, he went immediately in quest of Almena. Though almost worn to death with fatigue and sorrow, he travelled night and day, till he reached the country. But, alas! when he was there, what could he do? Stranger as he was to the people, and in a great measure to their language, he had as much to hope from chance, as from application, for the discovery of Almena.

He would now have sunk under the weight of his misfortunes, had he not availed himself of the first advice of Ardavan, and firmly relied on the Eternal Providence. "Immortal Mithra!" said the afflicted youth; "thou beholdest me oppressed with misery: but thy beams still shine upon me; and while I enjoy thy light, I will hope for thy favour!"

Thus comforting himself, he still continued his search; depending, for the necessary supports of nature, on the precarious bounty of the villages through which he passed; frequently making the mountain rocks the refuge of his night's repose, when nature, exhausted with toil and sorrow, in her own defence inclined him to sleep. He wandered incessantly from town to town, and from province to province; often exposed to the attacks of savage beasts, and often suffering the insults of the more savage people.

Having in vain gone over a large tract of the inland country, he now confined his search to the coast, in hopes that he might again see the vessel which took his Almena. Day by day he wandered on the beach, constantly casting his eyes on the immense waste of waters, and watching the ap-

proach of every vessel that he saw, with the same impatience of expectation, as if he had been assured that it contained Almena.

CHAPTER XIX.

As he was walking one evening by the castle of Sevasir, he heard a mournful voice proceeding from a garden within the fort. Solyman never neglected the voice of sorrow: he went nearer to the place from whence it seemed to proceed; and, looking through the iron palisadoes with which the garden was encompassed, he beheld a lady sitting in a melancholy posture on a flower-bank at a small distance.

In the irresistible transport of his heart, he cried aloud, "Almena!" The lady rose; and, as she came towards him, he perceived his mistake: "Pardon me, madam," said he; "I am an unhappy man, who have lost every thing that is dear to me in a lady, whom I have sought, in vain, for many months in this province; where I have still reason to believe she is confined, if, indeed, she yet lives; if she is not fallen a sacrifice to her own miseries, or to the barbarous cruelty of the villains who tore her from me."

"Stranger," said the lady, "it is long since I have known any comfort myself, and I am afraid I can have little for you. Your miseries affect me much: the same did my beloved husband once undergo, for whom I now mourn, and must for ever mourn in hopeless sorrow."

"Is your husband then dead," said Solyman; "or is he only lost to you, as Almena is to me? If the latter is the case, you may yet have hope: the all-seeing eye of Providence looks down upon all his creatures, and he will assuredly redress the misfortunes of the virtuous."

"We were inhabitants," replied the lady, "of the kingdom of Kanara. The Sundians made an incursion into our territories, and, amongst many other wretched people, carried off my husband and me."—"How, madam!" interrupted Solyman; "they were merciful, if they suffered your husband to accompany you,"—"Their mercy," said she, "did not extend so far: they presented me to the governor of this castle, and my husband they imprisoned in a distant part of the kingdom.

"Ever since I came within these hated walls, their savage master has aggravated my miseries, by the mortifying offers of his love; totally regardless of my sorrow and distraction, a thousand times has the unfeeling wretch insulted my torn heart with odious caresses, and still continues to persecute me in the same manner, upbraiding me with ingratitude for what he calls his kindness in permitting me to live. But I am not alone in my misfortunes: here are numbers of unhappy women under the same confinement, whose sufferings too nearly resemble my own. Some of them, like me, have still resisted the importunities of the tyrant; while others, more, I hope, through fear than inclination, have unhappily submitted to his will."

At these words, terror and apprehension were again roused in the heart of Solyman, and created a conflict that shook his frame. He stood aghast

and motionless for a moment: at last recollecting himself, "is there," said he; "tell me, madam, is there a lady within these walls, a native of Dehli, who was taken some months ago from on board a Kanarian vessel by the Sundians?"

"To that question," said the lady, "I can make no answer; we are all kept in different apartments, and not allowed to converse with each other; we are not even permitted, but alone, to walk in these gardens: and should I now be observed to talk with you, though through these detested bars, my future liberty would probably be endangered. All that you can do to know, whether the lady you have lost be in this place, is to attend at the different hours of the day near these palisadoes; where you will be able to observe, in their respective turns, the appearance of the women in the gardens. But you will incur great danger in the experiment: and, after all, should you find that your lady is here, what can it avail you? You will only have the mortification to know it, without being able to rescue her."

CHAPTER XX.

SOLYMAN took his leave of the lady; and, having formed his resolution, waited with the utmost impatience for the light of morning. He happened, indeed, to be so far secured from suspicion, as to be dressed in a Sundian habit, which belonged to an officer of the ship that carried off Almena, who compelled him to take it in exchange for his own.

But, insensible of danger, at the earliest dawn he hastened to his post, and passed the day in alternate hope and despair: he saw many women, but he saw not Almena. In the evening, therefore, regretting the disappointment even of those expectations which he dreaded to have confirmed, he resolved to quit his station till the return of morning, when, by the glimmering of the moon, he perceived another lady enter the garden.

As she came nearer, her image glanced through his heart more swiftly than the lightning smites the traveller on the mountain of Hima. The lady was Almena! In a burst of transport, he cried, "Almena! Solyman!" Struck at once with the voice, the name, and the figure of Solyman, surprise overcame her, and she fell senseless upon the terrace,

Solyman, unable to enter the garden, in an agony of terror cried out, "Save, save my Almena!" at the same time running round the walls in the utmost distraction. His exclamations alarmed the guard, who immediately secured him; though, from his cries and confusion, they concluded him to be mad, and made their report of him as such to the governor of the castle, who ordered him to be immediately brought before him.

Solyman, the moment he beheld the governor, fiercely cried out, "I conjure thee, if thou art a human being, let me instantly fly to the relief of a lady in thy gardens." The governor was alarmed by an appearance of reason in this request, and ordered him to be secured, while he went himself into the gardens to know if there was any foundation for it. There he found Almena supporting herself against the wall, not having perfectly re-

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overed either her strength or reason. "Art thou ndeed my Solyman," said she: "if thou art my Solyman, support me in thy arms." In his arms he took her, and bore her to a pavilion, where he held her till her reason returned. She turned her eyes full upon him, and, with a look of fear and horror shrunk from his embrace.

"Tell me, madam; I beseech you, tell me," said the governor, "what is the cause of this distraction? Why are those dear eyes so full of wildness and horror, and why do you look upon your protector with such aversion? Is there then some other person more happy in your favour and affection, and must I for ever languish at your feet in vain?"

"If thou hast any other affection for me," said Almena, "than that which is inspired by brutal instinct; if thou hast more feeling than the walls that surround thee, thou wilt surely pity me. The dear unhappy man, whom I fear ere now thy guards have seized, is the friend, for whose loss thou hast known me mourn ever since I came within thy power. Yes, thou wilt pity me: for thou hast wept: when I related to thee my miseries, the tears of compassion flowed from thine eyes. Let us throw ourselves at thy feet; let us owe our happiness to thee, and thou shalt have all the affection which is not due to Solyman."

The weeping beauty, as she uttered these words, threw herself before him in such an agony of sorrow, and such a posture of supplication, as would have moved any heart in which vice had not extinguished every spark of humanity. Far from being affected by it, the governor of Sevasir made her the following answer: "Absurd and vain! to

suppose that I should tamely yield that happiness to another, which I could never obtain myself. Know, madam, that both you and your lover are now in my power; and that he has no indulgence to hope for, but what your kindness to me may procure him." With these words he withdrew; rather less offended at the thought of having a rival in Almena's affections, than pleased with the hope that he might terrify her into compliance, by his menaces against her lover.

Almena remained in the most pitiable distress, sharpened by painful apprehensions for her own honour, and the life of Solyman; and, wandering alone into the garden, she added one night of sorrow more to the many she had suffered.

Great God! what misery may one villain, armed with power, bring upon thy creatures! Were there not a state of existence, where vice shall be punished and virtue rewarded, how would thy works seem to reproach their Almighty Maker! But let the sons of men learn, that he who is infinitely wise, is also perfectly just; and that he can as easily take cognizance of the moral conduct of his creatures, as he could at first create this immense system of the universe, in which the minutest creature declares the skill of the architect.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE impious tyrant of Sevasir enjoyed the balm of sleep and the refreshment of rest, while the vir-

tuous Solyman and Almena suffered the most grievous affliction.

When the morning appeared, Nagrakut, that was the wretch's name, went at his usual hour into the garden. Almena, who was still there, overcome by the weight of continued sorrow, had sunk into a transient slumber on a bench in the pavilion. Nagrakut approached and stood by her as she slumbered. There was a sight that might have excited tenderness in the breast of a savage; but it moved not the heart of Nagrakut, nor awakened any other passion in him but that of a libidinous desire. In a dream, she waved her hand, and cried, with a voice of mournful tenderness, "Do not murder him, Nagrakut? Let my Solyman live!" then, letting fall the hand she had raised, she sunk again into silent slumber.

Nagrakut yet felt no pity; but, placing himself near her on the bench, enclosed her in his arms. She awoke; and, finding herself in the embraces of the tyrant, shrieked out with the most distressful horror. Her cries pierced the cell where Solyman was confined. With the united strength of rage and terror, he burst the door of his prison; and, running through the apartments of the castle with a dagger in his hand, which he had fortunately snatched up in the way, he flew to the garden.

Almena was still shrieking and struggling in the arms of Nagrakut, who, endeavouring to sooth her to his embraces, had not observed the approach of Solyman. "Villain!" said Solyman, "remove thy execrable hands from the person of that lady, and employ them in the defence of thy own!" Nagrakut, who was the most abject coward,

called aloud to his guards. "Coward! slave!" said Solyman, "Draw this instant, or my dagger shall pierce thy heart." Nagrakut then fell at his feet; and, begging for mercy, promised him Almena and liberty. "This moment, then," said Solyman, "dismiss us from thy cursed prison." No sooner had he uttered these words, than the guards appeared. Nagrakut immediately beckoned to them to seize him: but Solyman, observing his motion, hastily ran up to him, and plunged his dagger into his heart.

The tyrant fell. No way of escape, however, was left for Solyman: he was instantly seized by the soldiers, loaded with heavy chains, and shut up, with Almena, in a strong apartment of the castle; with Almena he was shut up, for jealousy now no longer parted them; and she was considered as an accomplice in the murder of the governor.

The circumstance administered inexpressible consolation to them both. "At last, my Almena," said the lover, "fortune has brought thee to my arms: but after what miseries, good Heaven! and in what circumstances! Yet my heart never once doubted the justice or the care of Providence; we shall yet be happy in the valley of Irwan."

The spirits of Almena were so exhausted by the successive ravages of terror, sorrow, and surprise, that she reclined for some time in the arms of Solyman, unable to speak, and only venting her grief in broken and feeble sighs. The officers of the castle of Sevasir had sent in the meantime to the king of Sundah, to know in what manner he would have the murderers of the governor executed.

The death of a villain is seldom regretted, even by those to whom his villanies have been of service. The king of Sundah always hated the governor of Sevasir, but he dared not depose him, because he had been established under him by the mogul: he therefore sent no other commands to the officers of the castle, but that the prisoners should remain there till further orders.

Not long after this, a body of Kanarians entered the country of Sundah, and laid siege to the castle of Sevasir. As the death of the governor had thrown all into confusion, the fort was easily carried; and the Kanarians took prisoners all that were within the castle. Solyman and Almena, though they could not be displeased at this change of fortune, had yet another danger to encounter, which might prove as fatal to their happiness as any they had escaped could have been.

It is a custom in the eastern nations, to present the women that are taken in war to the kings, that they may select whom they like; and the rest are divided among the officers, according to their several ranks. All the ladies that were taken in the castle of Sevasir had this fate to undergo; and, as the governor had been curious in his choice, these women were looked upon as a most valuable capture.

CHAPTER XXII.

They were immediately conveyed to the court of Kanara, and presented to the king for his choice.

They all stood before him at the same time; and he looked upon each of them for some minutes: but his eye dwelt longer on Almena than the rest. Unfortunately, she observed this; and her fear and confusion now animated her features, and gave fresh beauties to her complexion. The king immediately selected her, and the rest were dismissed.

Solyman was all this time kept with the garrison of Sevasir, as a prisoner of war: but at length, having convinced the Kanarians, that he had no connexions with the king of Sundah, and that he was willing to enter into the service of their prince, his liberty was restored him. This was the only means by which he could attempt the recovery of Almena, who, as he was now informed, was retained by the king. He immediately repaired to the capital of Kanara; and signifying to the officers of the court that he had some important intelligence relating to the war, to communicate to his majesty, he gained an easy admittance to him.

When the king appeared, he prostrated himself before him; and, being commanded to speak, he thus expressed himself: "Let the king of Kanara live! for his ear is open to the complaints of the unhappy, and he despiseth no man for the miseries which chance has brought upon him."—"I am a man," interposed the king: "proceed."—"It was my hand that put an end to the life of your enemy, the governor of Sevasir."—"In that," replied the prince, "you did me a signal service: but, let me know your motives, and I shall be better able to judge of the action, as well as my obligations to you for it."

"O prince!" said Solyman, "I was possessed of a lady, more beautiful than the star that overflows its urn in the evening, and dearer to me than the life-drops of my heart. We were on board a Kanarian vessel that was trading to the Persian gulf; and were bound to the valley of Irwan in Mesopotamia, the place of my nativity: but, alas! before we had proceeded many leagues from our coast, we were boarded by a pirate of Sundah. We were plundered and dismissed; but the dear partner of my heart was taken from me. After long search I found, that she was in possession of the governor of Sevasir; who, regardless of her miseries, or the prepossession of her heart, cruelly continued to insult her with the offer of his love." —"Inhuman wretch!" interrupted the king: "but proceed." This ejaculation gave Solyman new hopes, and he continued his relation.

"Walking one evening by the garden of the fort, I discovered her on a terrace at a small distance. She was so much surprised by the suddenness of my appearance, that she fainted. Being unable to enter the gardens, in my distraction I cried for help; and my cries alarming the guard, I was seized. That night I was confined in a dungeon of the castle: but, early the next morning hearing the shrieks of a female voice, which I either knew or fear imagined it to be that of my love, rage and terror gave me more than natural strength, and I burst open the door of my prison. I was unarmed; but, fortunately, a dagger lying in my way, I snatched it up, and flew to the garden from whence the voice proceeded. There I beheld the dear object of my affections trembling in the embraces of the tyrant: at the sight of me,

he called aloud to his guards, cowardly refusing the offer I gave him of defending himself against my dagger: nay, he meanly begged his life, and offered me, on that condition, liberty for myself and the lady; but the guards immediately after coming up, he beckoned on them to seize me: I found time, however, to thrust my dagger into his base heart. Thus the villain perished."—"And justice," said the king, "directed your arm."

"O prince! continued Solyman, "I am still miserable. I have reason to believe, that some of your officers will detain that lady, as a prize taken in the castle of Sevasir."—"No officer of mine," replied the king, "shall be suffered to detain her: let me know her name, and she shall be immediately restored to you."—"Her name," said Solyman, "is Almena."

The king appeared disturbed, and walked backward and forward for some moments in the utmost confusion. He knew that Almena was the lady whom he had selected from the captives; and he had the most ardent affection for her. In a few moments he withdrew, and commanded Solyman to attend him the following day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE heart of the king was, in the mean time, distracted by different passions: urged by the most powerful love to detain Almena, and dissuaded from that by truth, humanity, and shame. "Am I," said he, "possessed of a throne, and shall I

have no more power to indulge my wishes, than the peasant of the field? What is the worth or the end of absolute power, if kings must tamely sacrifice their inclinations to the creatures they were born to command? Shall I give up such beauty as that of Almena; a beauty that has smitten my heart, and inspired me with such tenderness of affection as I never yet felt for woman? But Almena was Solyman's—it might be so; but she is now mine. Possession goes from one to another, according to the laws of nations; and, by those laws, Almena is mine.

"Why then do I feel such uneasy sensations, as much at the thoughts of keeping, as of parting with her? The laws of nature, the unvariable laws of nature and truth create them. The laws of nations ought always to be founded on these; and these suggest to me, that to keep Almena would be most injurious and inhuman. Shall I, who have condemned that in another, as a crime which deserved the punishment of death, commit the very same myself? what a detestable hypocrite shall I appear! Shall I, who promised the lover, that none of my officers should deprive him of Almena shall I degrade the king by doing what I would have punished in a subject? I love Almena, and should be exquisitely happy in the enjoyment of her; but shall I, therefore, make her miserable? how should I ever partake of happiness, if the object of my affections lived with me in sullen discontent, or inconsolable sorrow? Base and unworthy of the heart of man, must be that love, which would purchase its gratification by the misery of its object. The heart of Almena is Solyman's, and so shall be her person. Painful

is the alternative: but truth, and honour, and virtue, must prevail!"

Thus the generous king of Kanara overcame the efforts of importunate desire, by the force of virtue and reason; and nobly scorned to avail himself of his power against an unhappy man, who had been long persecuted by misfortune, and distressed in his love.

The hour came at which he had ordered Solyman to attend him. The king received him with a condescending smile; and, without the least appearance of uneasiness or dissatisfaction in his countenance, desired him not to be apprehensive about Almena, for that he should shortly be put in possession of her.

Having thus spoken, he went immediately to her apartment, and gently taking her hand, "Most beautiful of the daughters of India," said he, "cease your sorrows! I am not now come to offer you my love; but to recommend you to another lover, who possibly may be happier in your favour than I could ever hope to be: he is now in the palace; and if you will give me leave, I will introduce him to you."—"My heart," said Almena, "has been so much accustomed to new distresses, that it is not now shocked by their frequency: but if you have any pity for me, suffer me to bewail my miseries in solitude. Not to be interrupted in my sorrows, is all I ask; and that is not, surely, too much for you to grant." The king answered with a smile, "If I am not to be happy in your love, I am determined that none but the person whom I am about to introduce to you, shall be so;" and, hastily quitting the apartment, he returned with Solyman.

The lovers flew to each other's arms: "My Solyman!"—"My Almena!" In a few moments, being recollected, they threw themselves at the feet of the king; and Solyman, as well as the transports of his heart would give him leave, expressed his gratitude: "Generous prince," said he, "the thanks of Solyman are not worth your acceptance. But you will not be without a reward; yours shall be the supreme pleasure of conscious goodness; yours shall be the care of the eternal Providence, and the prayers and blessings of Solyman and Almena!"

In the gratitude of his heart Solyman offered the king his assistance in the prosecution of the war with the Sundians; but he humanely refused his offer, telling him,—That love and war were no allies; that his sufferings had already been too many and too great: that neither he should be exposed to danger, nor Almena to fear, on his account. He moreover told them, that if they were inclined to return by sea to the valley of Irwan, they should be attended by an armed vessel, to secure them from the assaults of an enemy. But this obliging offer they declined; Solyman was unwilling any more to risk that which was dearer than life; and Almena yet trembled at the thoughts of the Sundian pirate. They, therefore, notwithstanding the length and tediousness of the way, determined to go by land; and, having taken leave of the king, who supplied them with every necessary, and lent them his own beasts and attendants, they set their faces toward Dehli.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THEIR road was through a mountainous country, troublesome to the traveller; little cultivated by the labours, or enlivened by the habitations of men. But what are the difficulties which love and hope cannot surmount! they despise the threats of danger, and the toils of labour; and proceed with resolution through those perplexities, which by other eyes are beheld with despair. The travellers, thus animated, and looking forward to those delightful scenes of rest, those days of rural ease and happiness which they should enjoy in the valley of Irwan, passed over the rugged mountains that opposed their way, without the least sense of weariness or fear.

After travelling many days, without any accident or delay, more than the necessary refreshment of nature required, they arrived at Dehli. At the sight of her native place, Almena shed a tear of joy, and the lovers embraced each other with more than common tenderness; so much is there in the power of external circumstances to improve and exalt the pleasures of the mind. Almena always loved her Solyman with the most tender affection; but she loved him at Dehli more than in any other place. Delight is inseparable from the idea of those scenes, where we have passed the happy hours of childhood; and though, when in the maturity of life we revisit our native countries, we cannot enjoy that innocent cheerfulness, of which we still retain some notion; yet we are delighted with the remembrance of it, and those scenes are always dear to us.

have no more power to indulge my wishes, than the peasant of the field? What is the worth or the end of absolute power, if kings must tamely sacrifice their inclinations to the creatures they were born to command? Shall I give up such beauty as that of Almena; a beauty that has smitten my heart, and inspired me with such tenderness of affection as I never yet felt for woman? But Almena was Solyman's—it might be so; but she is now mine. Possession goes from one to another, according to the laws of nations; and, by those laws, Almena is mine.

"Why then do I feel such uneasy sensations, as much at the thoughts of keeping, as of parting with her? The laws of nature, the unvariable laws of nature and truth create them. The laws of nations ought always to be founded on these; and these suggest to me, that to keep Almena would be most injurious and inhuman. Shall I, who have condemned that in another, as a crime which deserved the punishment of death, commit the very same myself? what a detestable hypocrite shall I appear! Shall I, who promised the lover, that none of my officers should deprive him of Almena shall I degrade the king by doing what I would have punished in a subject? I love Almena, and should be exquisitely happy in the enjoyment of her; but shall I, therefore, make her miserable? how should I ever partake of happiness, if the object of my affections lived with me in sullen discontent, or inconsolable sorrow? Base and unworthy of the heart of man, must be that love, which would purchase its gratification by the misery of its object. The heart of Almena is Solyman's, and so shall be her person. Painful

is the alternative: but truth, and honour, and virtue, must prevail!"

Thus the generous king of Kanara overcame the efforts of importunate desire, by the force of virtue and reason; and nobly scorned to avail himself of his power against an unhappy man, who had been long persecuted by misfortune, and distressed in his love.

The hour came at which he had ordered Solyman to attend him. The king received him with a condescending smile; and, without the least appearance of uneasiness or dissatisfaction in his countenance, desired him not to be apprehensive about Almena, for that he should shortly be put in possession of her.

Having thus spoken, he went immediately to her apartment, and gently taking her hand, "Most beautiful of the daughters of India," said he, "cease your sorrows! I am not now come to offer you my love; but to recommend you to another lover, who possibly may be happier in your favour than I could ever hope to be: he is now in the palace; and if you will give me leave, I will introduce him to you."—"My heart," said Almena, "has been so much accustomed to new distresses, that it is not now shocked by their frequency: but if you have any pity for me, suffer me to bewail my miseries in solitude. Not to be interrupted in my sorrows, is all I ask; and that is not, surely, too much for you to grant." The king answered with a smile, "If I am not to be happy in your love, I am determined that none but the person whom I am about to introduce to you, shall be so;" and, hastily quitting the apartment, he returned with Solyman.

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Almena forgot not to visit her village, and the people whom she called her own. The poor inhabitants, at the sight of their benefactress, wept with pleasure; and she did not leave them, without giving them new exhortations to their duty, and new instances of her beneficence. Indeed, in all generous acts, she now doubled her assiduities; for she concluded, that, on account of her great and singular obligations to Providence, she ought, in gratitude, to have a superior portion of virtue.

After a short stay at Dehli, Solyman and Almena renewed their journey, and set forward to Ispahan. This route was longer; but it was more easy, and less exposed to robbers, than that which led to the Persian gulf. When they arrived at Ispahan, Solyman had the pleasure to find his friend the Merchant, who was still detained by business in that city. He easily made his apology, for not accepting, as he had proposed, his kind offer of a passage into Europe, by introducing him to Almena. He related to him their various interesting adventures, to which he listened with the eager curiosity and concern of a friend, acknowledging all along the hand of Providence in their preservation. For the amiable and accomplished Almena he felt great esteem; her pathetic descriptions, and her just and natural observations, were extremely entertaining and affecting. But he was most charmed with the character of the king of Kanara; and requested Almena to relate every particular of his behaviour.

"When I first beheld him," said she, "I perceived in his countenance a noble affability and openness which seemed to speak a great and ge-

nerous mind. This gave me some pleasure; as I might have hopes from his compassion, should it be my fate to be selected by him; such, you know, it was. When I was conducted into an apartment of the palace, he waited on me with the most affable politeness; and, seeing me in tears, he gently took my hand, and spoke to the following effect: "Be not distressed, fair Almena! Though you are in the power of a prince, you are not in the hands of a tyrant. If time, and the assiduities of tenderness, may prevail on you to return my love, I shall be happy; if not, you shall never be made miserable by cruelty or by violence." Consistent with his declaration was his whole conduct to me, during the time I was in his possession. How I regained my liberty you have already heard."

"To the character which you have already received of the Kanarian prince," said Solyman to the Merchant, "I will add a poetical portrait, which possibly may not be disagreeable to you: my gratitude for his favours, and my admiration of his virtues, induced me to attempt it."

THE AMIABLE KING.

The free-born muse her tribute rarely brings,
Or burns her incense to the power of kings;
But virtue ever shall her voice command,
Alike a spade or sceptre in her hand.
Is there a prince untainted with a throne,
That makes the interest of mankind his own;
Whose bounty knows no bounds of time or place,
Who nobly feels for all the human race;
A prince, that acts in reason's steady sphere,
No slave to passion, and no dupe to fear;

A breast, where mild humility resides,
Where virtue dictates, and where wisdom guides ;
A mind that, stretch'd beyond the years of youth,
Explores the secret springs of taste and truth ;
These, these are virtues, which the muse shall sing ;
And plant, for these, her laurels round a king !
Kanara's monarch ! this shall be thy praise,
For this, be crown'd with never-fading bays !

"Your verses," said the Merchant, "are very agreeable to me, for they are justly applicable to a prince, whom every merchant in Great Britain has the greatest reason to respect ; and who is beloved by his subjects, as much as a father by his children : he too is young, as is the king of Kanara. But I have lately had the pleasure to hear of his marriage ; and, at the same time I received from a literary correspondent, an ode on the occasion ; which, as you have a poetical taste, I shall make no scruple to offer you."

HYMENEAL.

Awake, thou everlasting lyre !
That once the mighty Pindar strung,
When, rapt with more than mortal fire,
The gods of Greece he sung :
Awake !
Arrest the rapid foot of time again,
With liquid notes of joy, and pleasure's melting strain.

Crown'd with each beauteous flower that blows
On Acidalia's tuneful side ;
With all Aonia's rosy pride,
Where numerous Aganippe flows ;
From Thespian groves and fountains wild,
Come, thou yellow-vested boy,
Redolent of youth and joy,
Fair Urania's favour'd child !*

* See Catullus.

George to thee devotes the day :
To Hymen ! haste away !

Daughter of the genial main !
Queen of youth and rosy smiles,
Queen of dimple-dwelling wiles ;
Come, with all thy Paphian train !
O give the fair that blooms for Britain's throne
Thy melting charms of love, thy soul-enchanting zone.

Daughter of the genial main !
Bring that heart-dissolving power,
Which once in Ida's sacred bower
The soul of Jove oppos'd in vain :
The sire of gods thy conquering charms confess'd ;
And vanquish'd sunk, sunk down on Juno's fostering breast.

She comes ! The conscious sea subsides;
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides :
Smooth the silken surface lies,
Where Venus' flowery chariot flies :
Paphian airs in ambush sleep
On the still bosom of the deep ;
Paphian maids around her move,
Keen-eyed Hope, and Joy, and Love :
Their rosy breast a thousand Cupids lave ;
And dip their wanton wings, and beat the buxom wave.

But mark, of more than vulgar mien,
With regal grace, and radiant eye,
A form in youthful majesty!
Britain, hail thy favour'd queen !
For her, the conscious sea subsides,
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides :
O'er the glassy bosom'd main,
Venus leads her laughing train :
The Paphian maids move graceful by her side ;
And o'er the buxom waves, the rosy Cupids ride.

Fly, ye fairy-footed hours !
Fly, with aromatic flowers !
Such as, bath'd in orient dews,
Beauty's living glow diffuse ;

Such as in Idalia's grove
Breathe the sweets, the soul of love!

Come genial god of chaste delight,
With wreaths of festive roses crown'd,
And torch that burns with radiance bright,
And liberal robe that sweeps the ground,
Bring thy days of golden joy,
Pleasures pure that never cloy!
Bring to Britain's happy pair
All that's kind, and good, and fair!
George to thee devotes the day:
To Hymen! haste away!
Daughters of Jove! ye virgins sage,
That wait on Camus' hoary age;
That oft his winding vales along
Have smooth'd your silver-woven song;
O wake once more those lays sublime,
That live beyond the wrecks of time!
To crown your Albion's boasted pair,
The never fading wreath prepare;
While her rocks echo to this grateful strain,
"The friends of Freedom and of Britain reign!"

"The ode you have obliged me with," says Solyman, "though I do not very well understand it, gives me some idea of the enthusiasm and harmony of the English poetry. But I am less pleased with the productions of art in your country, than with the affectionate duty which the people show to their king: for that is the basis of civil happiness; and indeed every humane prince, who has the interest of his subjects at heart, will always reign in their affections.

"But now, my friend, if you are not too much taken, up with your concerns at Ispahan, will you be prevailed on to visit the valley of Irwan? As you are a lover of nature, and of the muses, you will there meet with much to entertain you;

at least, you will find a retreat from the fatigues of business, and the plagues of popularity. Almena too joins in this request, and will be glad of so entertaining a friend in the first stages of her retirement."

The Merchant accepted the invitation, and they left Ispahan the following day. He was desirous to hear from Almena the story of her captivity, and took the first opportunity to request it: "I have heard," said he, "from Solyman, the greatest part of your adventures; but I have not been informed how you passed that unhappy period of time, from your being taken by the Sundians, to your departure from the castle of Sevasir."

"You call back memory, sir," said Almena, "to the days of misery: but as I can at this distance look upon them without terror, I will endeavour to describe them to you.

"When I was first taken by the Sundians, my distraction was so great, that I retain no idea of what passed, till the captain of the vessel conveyed me on shore to the castle of Sevasir, and presented me, terrified and almost frantic as I was, to the detested governor; who, as I have been since informed, received such kind of acknowledgments from the seamen, for protecting them in their illegal and piratical captures.

"The wretch, as well as I remember, seemed totally insensible to my misery; and, with a smile upon his countenance, ordered his domestics to convey me to my apartments. These, indeed, wanted neither elegance nor convenience; but I despised the one, and neglected the other. The first evening I passed in the most painful anguish for the loss of Solyman, and the most dreadful ap-

prehensions of injurious treatment from the governor. The women that were about me, seemed the wretched remains of ruined innocence, who had first been victims to the desires of the tyrant, and afterwards made his slaves. Dreadful was the scene I had before me! Some of these unhappy creatures seemed to pity me, and to be concerned for my approaching misfortunes; while others, who with their virtue had lost their humanity, looked upon me with a careless scorn; pleased, I fear, with the thought, that they should see one woman more, as miserable and as despicable as themselves.

"Early the next morning, the governor came into my apartment; and, casting his eyes upon the bed on which I had not reposed: 'It seems, madam,' said he with a scornful smile, 'that you approve not of your lodgings; but a little time, it is to be presumed, will reconcile you to us.' These morning visits he constantly paid me; and as he always found me in sullen sorrow, he behaved much in the same manner. At last he changed his address; seemed to pity me; asked me for the story of my misfortunes; and, I believe, wept when he heard it: but as I was aware of the hypocrite, I was equally regardless of his pity, as I had been of his scorn; and still continued to look upon him with the same forbidding aversion and disdain.

"Thus passed my days in this confinement: but they would have been more intolerable, had I not found a harp in my apartments, which probably had been left there by some unhappy lady, who had possessed them before me. With this instrument I amused myself for many a melancholy

hour, which must otherwise have passed away in the most miserable languor. I also composed a song, suitable to my state of mind and my misfortunes, which I adapted to my harp, and which, I think, was as follows:

SONG.

'T is o'er—the pleasing prospect's o'er!
My weary heart can hope no more—
Then welcome, wan despair!
Approach with all thy dreadful train;
With anguish, discontent, and pain,
And thorny-pillow'd care!

Gay hope, and ease, and joy, and rest,
All, all that charms the peaceful breast,
For ever I resign.
Let pale anxiety instead,
That has not where to lay her head,
And lasting woe, be mine!

It comes! I feel the painful woe—
My eyes, for Solyman, will flow
In silent grief again;
Who wand'ring o'er some mountain drear
Now haply sheds the pensive tear,
And calls on me in vain.

Perhaps, along the lonely shores,
He now the sea's blue breast explores,
To watch the distant sail:
Perhaps, on Sundah's hills forlorn,
He faints, with aching toil o'erborn;
And life's last spirits fail.

Ah! no—the cruel thought forbear!
Avaunt, thou fiend of fell despair,
That only death canst give!
While Heaven eternal rules above,
Almena yet may find her love,
And Solyman may live!

"Such, sir, was my life in the castle of Sevasir; which passed like the waters of Zenderoud, that in some places are tortured by rocks and precipices, and in others languish in dull stagnation."

CHAPTER XXV.

The travellers had now proceeded on their way to the valley of Irwan, as far as the village of Abdat; where Solyman proposed that they should visit the lovers who owed their preservation to him. Of this he was the more desirous, as he had never seen them since he had first recommended them to the protection of his father: but the pleasure he proposed to himself from this visit, arose not from a desire of being flattered with their acknowledgments, but of beholding and enjoying their happiness.

The lovers received their benefactor with the greatest ardour of gratitude; but at the same time with that delicacy which proved it to be sincere: they were not loud in their acknowledgments, nor officious in their compliments; but yet their attention to their guests showed how much they were delighted with this opportunity of expressing their respect to Solyman. The travellers, in the meantime, were not less pleased to behold the peculiar happiness of the lovers, who seemed to have but one heart and one inclination. Solyman and Almena beheld in them a picture for themselves; and felt more sensibly their own felicity,

when they had before them so pleasing an image of it.

The Merchant too was delighted with this scene of conjugal happiness. "Such," said he to Solyman, "are the genuine fruits of those alliances which are made by love. When I behold them, I blush for myself and for my countrymen; for love, genuine love, as if it were no longer a passion essential to human nature, is looked upon as an Utopian idea, existing only in the imagination of poets and enthusiasts: hence, every tendency to it is ridiculed as romantic, and modern marriages are only contracts of convenience. A British lady is exposed to sale; and if she has a good person, as well as an ample fortune, she hopes by that addition only to fetch a higher price, and make a better market. This, however, it must be owned, is not the foible of women only; the men are equally, if not more mercenary; and have, if possible, more selfish views in their marriages; so that, in this case, cunning is only opposed to cunning. All this proceeds from that mischievous opinion, which measures happiness by the possessions of fortune. Hence, that mutual coldness and indifference which both experience before the marriage-torch is extinct: from new acquisitions of wealth, each expects new degrees of felicity, and both are disappointed; when they find themselves mistaken, destitute of that affectionate tenderness which endears the married state, they look upon each other as the cause of discontent, and disgust and aversion succeed. Thus they sacrifice to vanity, and reap the fruits of it!"

From the village of Abdat, Solyman and Al-

The death of a villain is seldom regretted, even by those to whom his villanies have been of service. The king of Sundah always hated the governor of Sevasir, but he dared not depose him, because he had been established under him by the mogul: he therefore sent no other commands to the officers of the castle, but that the prisoners should remain there till further orders.

Not long after this, a body of Kanarians entered the country of Sundah, and laid siege to the castle of Sevasir. As the death of the governor had thrown all into confusion, the fort was easily carried; and the Kanarians took prisoners all that were within the castle. Solyman and Almena, though they could not be displeased at this change of fortune, had yet another danger to encounter, which might prove as fatal to their happiness as any they had escaped could have been.

It is a custom in the eastern nations, to present the women that are taken in war to the kings, that they may select whom they like; and the rest are divided among the officers, according to their several ranks. All the ladies that were taken in the castle of Sevasir had this fate to undergo; and, as the governor had been curious in his choice, these women were looked upon as a most valuable capture.

CHAPTER XXII.

They were immediately conveyed to the court of Kanara, and presented to the king for his choice.

They all stood before him at the same time; and he looked upon each of them for some minutes: but his eye dwelt longer on Almena than the rest. Unfortunately, she observed this; and her fear and confusion now animated her features, and gave fresh beauties to her complexion. The king immediately selected her, and the rest were dismissed.

Solyman was all this time kept with the garrison of Sevasir, as a prisoner of war: but at length, having convinced the Kanarians, that he had no connexions with the king of Sundah, and that he was willing to enter into the service of their prince, his liberty was restored him. This was the only means by which he could attempt the recovery of Almena, who, as he was now informed, was retained by the king. He immediately repaired to the capital of Kanara; and signifying to the officers of the court that he had some important intelligence relating to the war, to communicate to his majesty, he gained an easy admittance to him.

When the king appeared, he prostrated himself before him; and, being commanded to speak, he thus expressed himself: "Let the king of Kanara live! for his ear is open to the complaints of the unhappy, and he despiseth no man for the miseries which chance has brought upon him."—"I am a man," interposed the king: "proceed."—"It was my hand that put an end to the life of your enemy, the governor of Sevasir."—"In that," replied the prince, "you did me a signal service: but, let me know your motives, and I shall be better able to judge of the action, as well as my obligations to you for it."

"O prince!" said Solyman, "I was possessed of a lady, more beautiful than the star that overflows its urn in the evening, and dearer to me than the life-drops of my heart. We were on board a Kanarian vessel that was trading to the Persian gulf; and were bound to the valley of Irwan in Mesopotamia, the place of my nativity: but, alas! before we had proceeded many leagues from our coast, we were boarded by a pirate of Sundah. We were plundered and dismissed; but the dear partner of my heart was taken from me. After long search I found, that she was in possession of the governor of Sevasir; who, regardless of her miseries, or the prepossession of her heart, cruelly continued to insult her with the offer of his love." —"Inhuman wretch!" interrupted the king: "but proceed." This ejaculation gave Solyman new hopes, and he continued his relation.

"Walking one evening by the garden of the fort, I discovered her on a terrace at a small distance. She was so much surprised by the suddenness of my appearance, that she fainted. Being unable to enter the gardens, in my distraction I cried for help; and my cries alarming the guard, I was seized. That night I was confined in a dungeon of the castle: but, early the next morning hearing the shrieks of a female voice, which I either knew or fear imagined it to be that of my love, rage and terror gave me more than natural strength, and I burst open the door of my prison. I was unarmed; but, fortunately, a dagger lying in my way, I snatched it up, and flew to the garden from whence the voice proceeded. There I beheld the dear object of my affections trembling in the embraces of the tyrant: at the sight of me,

he called aloud to his guards, cowardly refusing the offer I gave him of defending himself against my dagger: nay, he meanly begged his life, and offered me, on that condition, liberty for myself and the lady; but the guards immediately after coming up, he beckoned on them to seize me: I found time, however, to thrust my dagger into his base heart. Thus the villain perished."—"And justice," said the king, "directed your arm."

"O prince! continued Solyman, "I am still miserable. I have reason to believe, that some of your officers will detain that lady, as a prize taken in the castle of Sevasir."—"No officer of mine," replied the king, "shall be suffered to detain her: let me know her name, and she shall be immediately restored to you."—"Her name," said Solyman, "is Almena."

The king appeared disturbed, and walked backward and forward for some moments in the utmost confusion. He knew that Almena was the lady whom he had selected from the captives; and he had the most ardent affection for her. In a few moments he withdrew, and commanded Solyman to attend him the following day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE heart of the king was, in the mean time, distracted by different passions: urged by the most powerful love to detain Almena, and dissuaded from that by truth, humanity, and shame. "Am I," said he, "possessed of a throne, and shall I

proach of every vessel that he saw, with the same impatience of expectation, as if he had been assured that it contained Almena.

CHAPTER XIX.

As he was walking one evening by the castle of Sevasir, he heard a mournful voice proceeding from a garden within the fort. Solyman never neglected the voice of sorrow: he went nearer to the place from whence it seemed to proceed; and, looking through the iron palisadoes with which the garden was encompassed, he beheld a lady sitting in a melancholy posture on a flower-bank at a small distance.

In the irresistible transport of his heart, he cried aloud, "Almena!" The lady rose; and, as she came towards him, he perceived his mistake: "Pardon me, madam," said he; "I am an unhappy man, who have lost every thing that is dear to me in a lady, whom I have sought, in vain, for many months in this province; where I have still reason to believe she is confined, if, indeed, she yet lives; if she is not fallen a sacrifice to her own miseries, or to the barbarous cruelty of the villains who tore her from me."

"Stranger," said the lady, "it is long since I have known any comfort myself, and I am afraid I can have little for you. Your miseries affect me much: the same did my beloved husband once undergo, for whom I now mourn, and must for ever mourn in hopeless sorrow."

"Is your husband then dead," said Solyman; "or is he only lost to you, as Almena is to me? If the latter is the case, you may yet have hope: the all-seeing eye of Providence looks down upon all his creatures, and he will assuredly redress the misfortunes of the virtuous."

"We were inhabitants," replied the lady, "of the kingdom of Kanara. The Sundians made an incursion into our territories, and, amongst many other wretched people, carried off my husband and me."—"How, madam!" interrupted Solyman; "they were merciful, if they suffered your husband to accompany you,"—"Their mercy," said she, "did not extend so far: they presented me to the governor of this castle, and my husband they imprisoned in a distant part of the kingdom.

"Ever since I came within these hated walls, their savage master has aggravated my miseries, by the mortifying offers of his love; totally regardless of my sorrow and distraction, a thousand times has the unfeeling wretch insulted my torn heart with odious caresses, and still continues to persecute me in the same manner, upbraiding me with ingratitude for what he calls his kindness in permitting me to live. But I am not alone in my misfortunes: here are numbers of unhappy women under the same confinement, whose sufferings too nearly resemble my own. Some of them, like me, have still resisted the importunities of the tyrant; while others, more, I hope, through fear than inclination, have unhappily submitted to his will."

At these words, terror and apprehension were again roused in the heart of Solyman, and created a conflict that shook his frame. He stood aghast

and motionless for a moment: at last recollecting himself, "is there," said he; "tell me, madam, is there a lady within these walls, a native of Dehli, who was taken some months ago from on board a Kanarian vessel by the Sundians?"

"To that question," said the lady, "I can make no answer; we are all kept in different apartments, and not allowed to converse with each other; we are not even permitted, but alone, to walk in these gardens: and should I now be observed to talk with you, though through these detested bars, my future liberty would probably be endangered. All that you can do to know, whether the lady you have lost be in this place, is to attend at the different hours of the day near these palisadoes; where you will be able to observe, in their respective turns, the appearance of the women in the gardens. But you will incur great danger in the experiment: and, after all, should you find that your lady is here, what can it avail you? You will only have the mortification to know it, without being able to rescue her."

CHAPTER XX.

SOLYMAN took his leave of the lady; and, having formed his resolution, waited with the utmost impatience for the light of morning. He happened, indeed, to be so far secured from suspicion, as to be dressed in a Sundian habit, which belonged to an officer of the ship that carried off Almena, who compelled him to take it in exchange for his own.

But, insensible of danger, at the earliest dawn he hastened to his post, and passed the day in alternate hope and despair: he saw many women, but he saw not Almena. In the evening, therefore, regretting the disappointment even of those expectations which he dreaded to have confirmed, he resolved to quit his station till the return of morning, when, by the glimmering of the moon, he perceived another lady enter the garden.

As she came nearer, her image glanced through his heart more swiftly than the lightning smites the traveller on the mountain of Hima. The lady was Almena! In a burst of transport, he cried, "Almena! Solyman!" Struck at once with the voice, the name, and the figure of Solyman, surprise overcame her, and she fell senseless upon the terrace,

Solyman, unable to enter the garden, in an agony of terror cried out, "Save, save my Almena!" at the same time running round the walls in the utmost distraction. His exclamations alarmed the guard, who immediately secured him; though, from his cries and confusion, they concluded him to be mad, and made their report of him as such to the governor of the castle, who ordered him to be immediately brought before him.

Solyman, the moment he beheld the governor, fiercely cried out, "I conjure thee, if thou art a human being, let me instantly fly to the relief of a lady in thy gardens." The governor was alarmed by an appearance of reason in this request, and ordered him to be secured, while he went himself into the gardens to know if there was any foundation for it. There he found Almena supporting herself against the wall, not having perfectly re-

overed either her strength or reason. "Art thou ndeed my Solyman," said she: "if thou art my Solyman, support me in thy arms." In his arms he took her, and bore her to a pavilion, where he held her till her reason returned. She turned her eyes full upon him, and, with a look of fear and horror shrunk from his embrace.

"Tell me, madam; I beseech you, tell me," said the governor, "what is the cause of this distraction? Why are those dear eyes so full of wildness and horror, and why do you look upon your protector with such aversion? Is there then some other person more happy in your favour and affection, and must I for ever languish at your feet in vain?"

"If thou hast any other affection for me," said Almena, "than that which is inspired by brutal instinct; if thou hast more feeling than the walls that surround thee, thou wilt surely pity me. The dear unhappy man, whom I fear ere now thy guards have seized, is the friend, for whose loss thou hast known me mourn ever since I came within thy power. Yes, thou wilt pity me: for thou hast wept: when I related to thee my miseries, the tears of compassion flowed from thine eyes. Let us throw ourselves at thy feet; let us owe our happiness to thee, and thou shalt have all the affection which is not due to Solyman."

The weeping beauty, as she uttered these words, threw herself before him in such an agony of sorrow, and such a posture of supplication, as would have moved any heart in which vice had not extinguished every spark of humanity. Far from being affected by it, the governor of Sevasir made her the following answer: "Absurd and vain! to

suppose that I should tamely yield that happiness to another, which I could never obtain myself. Know, madam, that both you and your lover are now in my power; and that he has no indulgence to hope for, but what your kindness to me may procure him." With these words he withdrew; rather less offended at the thought of having a rival in Almena's affections, than pleased with the hope that he might terrify her into compliance, by his menaces against her lover.

Almena remained in the most pitiable distress, sharpened by painful apprehensions for her own honour, and the life of Solyman; and, wandering alone into the garden, she added one night of sorrow more to the many she had suffered.

Great God! what misery may one villain, armed with power, bring upon thy creatures! Were there not a state of existence, where vice shall be punished and virtue rewarded, how would thy works seem to reproach their Almighty Maker! But let the sons of men learn, that he who is infinitely wise, is also perfectly just; and that he can as easily take cognizance of the moral conduct of his creatures, as he could at first create this immense system of the universe, in which the minutest creature declares the skill of the architect.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE impious tyrant of Sevasir enjoyed the balm of sleep and the refreshment of rest, while the vir-

tuous Solyman and Almena suffered the most grievous affliction.

When the morning appeared, Nagrakut, that was the wretch's name, went at his usual hour into the garden. Almena, who was still there, overcome by the weight of continued sorrow, had sunk into a transient slumber on a bench in the pavilion. Nagrakut approached and stood by her as she slumbered. There was a sight that might have excited tenderness in the breast of a savage; but it moved not the heart of Nagrakut, nor awakened any other passion in him but that of a libidinous desire. In a dream, she waved her hand, and cried, with a voice of mournful tenderness, "Do not murder him, Nagrakut? Let my Solyman live!" then, letting fall the hand she had raised, she sunk again into silent slumber.

Nagrakut yet felt no pity; but, placing himself near her on the bench, enclosed her in his arms. She awoke; and, finding herself in the embraces of the tyrant, shrieked out with the most distressful horror. Her cries pierced the cell where Solyman was confined. With the united strength of rage and terror, he burst the door of his prison; and, running through the apartments of the castle with a dagger in his hand, which he had fortunately snatched up in the way, he flew to the garden.

Almena was still shrieking and struggling in the arms of Nagrakut, who, endeavouring to sooth her to his embraces, had not observed the approach of Solyman. "Villain!" said Solyman, "remove thy execrable hands from the person of that lady, and employ them in the defence of thy own!" Nagrakut, who was the most abject coward,

called aloud to his guards. "Coward! slave!" said Solyman, "Draw this instant, or my dagger shall pierce thy heart." Nagrakut then fell at his feet; and, begging for mercy, promised him Almena and liberty. "This moment, then," said Solyman, "dismiss us from thy cursed prison." No sooner had he uttered these words, than the guards appeared. Nagrakut immediately beckoned to them to seize him: but Solyman, observing his motion, hastily ran up to him, and plunged his dagger into his heart.

The tyrant fell. No way of escape, however, was left for Solyman: he was instantly seized by the soldiers, loaded with heavy chains, and shut up, with Almena, in a strong apartment of the castle; with Almena he was shut up, for jealousy now no longer parted them; and she was considered as an accomplice in the murder of the governor.

The circumstance administered inexpressible consolation to them both. "At last, my Almena," said the lover, "fortune has brought thee to my arms: but after what miseries, good Heaven! and in what circumstances! Yet my heart never once doubted the justice or the care of Providence; we shall yet be happy in the valley of Irwan."

The spirits of Almena were so exhausted by the successive ravages of terror, sorrow, and surprise, that she reclined for some time in the arms of Solyman, unable to speak, and only venting her grief in broken and feeble sighs. The officers of the castle of Sevasir had sent in the meantime to the king of Sundah, to know in what manner he would have the murderers of the governor executed.

The death of a villain is seldom regretted, even by those to whom his villanies have been of service. The king of Sundah always hated the governor of Sevasir, but he dared not depose him, because he had been established under him by the mogul: he therefore sent no other commands to the officers of the castle, but that the prisoners should remain there till further orders.

Not long after this, a body of Kanarians entered the country of Sundah, and laid siege to the castle of Sevasir. As the death of the governor had thrown all into confusion, the fort was easily carried; and the Kanarians took prisoners all that were within the castle. Solyman and Almena, though they could not be displeased at this change of fortune, had yet another danger to encounter, which might prove as fatal to their happiness as any they had escaped could have been.

It is a custom in the eastern nations, to present the women that are taken in war to the kings, that they may select whom they like; and the rest are divided among the officers, according to their several ranks. All the ladies that were taken in the castle of Sevasir had this fate to undergo; and, as the governor had been curious in his choice, these women were looked upon as a most valuable capture.

CHAPTER XXII.

They were immediately conveyed to the court of Kanara, and presented to the king for his choice.

They all stood before him at the same time; and he looked upon each of them for some minutes: but his eye dwelt longer on Almena than the rest. Unfortunately, she observed this; and her fear and confusion now animated her features, and gave fresh beauties to her complexion. The king immediately selected her, and the rest were dismissed.

Solyman was all this time kept with the garrison of Sevasir, as a prisoner of war: but at length, having convinced the Kanarians, that he had no connexions with the king of Sundah, and that he was willing to enter into the service of their prince, his liberty was restored him. This was the only means by which he could attempt the recovery of Almena, who, as he was now informed, was retained by the king. He immediately repaired to the capital of Kanara; and signifying to the officers of the court that he had some important intelligence relating to the war, to communicate to his majesty, he gained an easy admittance to him.

When the king appeared, he prostrated himself before him; and, being commanded to speak, he thus expressed himself: "Let the king of Kanara live! for his ear is open to the complaints of the unhappy, and he despiseth no man for the miseries which chance has brought upon him."—"I am a man," interposed the king: "proceed."—"It was my hand that put an end to the life of your enemy, the governor of Sevasir."—"In that," replied the prince, "you did me a signal service: but, let me know your motives, and I shall be better able to judge of the action, as well as my obligations to you for it."

"O prince!" said Solyman, "I was possessed of a lady, more beautiful than the star that overflows its urn in the evening, and dearer to me than the life-drops of my heart. We were on board a Kanarian vessel that was trading to the Persian gulf; and were bound to the valley of Irwan in Mesopotamia, the place of my nativity: but, alas! before we had proceeded many leagues from our coast, we were boarded by a pirate of Sundah. We were plundered and dismissed; but the dear partner of my heart was taken from me. After long search I found, that she was in possession of the governor of Sevasir; who, regardless of her miseries, or the prepossession of her heart, cruelly continued to insult her with the offer of his love." —"Inhuman wretch!" interrupted the king: "but proceed." This ejaculation gave Solyman new hopes, and he continued his relation.

"Walking one evening by the garden of the fort, I discovered her on a terrace at a small distance. She was so much surprised by the suddenness of my appearance, that she fainted. Being unable to enter the gardens, in my distraction I cried for help; and my cries alarming the guard, I was seized. That night I was confined in a dungeon of the castle: but, early the next morning hearing the shrieks of a female voice, which I either knew or fear imagined it to be that of my love, rage and terror gave me more than natural strength, and I burst open the door of my prison. I was unarmed; but, fortunately, a dagger lying in my way, I snatched it up, and flew to the garden from whence the voice proceeded. There I beheld the dear object of my affections trembling in the embraces of the tyrant: at the sight of me,

he called aloud to his guards, cowardly refusing the offer I gave him of defending himself against my dagger: nay, he meanly begged his life, and offered me, on that condition, liberty for myself and the lady; but the guards immediately after coming up, he beckoned on them to seize me: I found time, however, to thrust my dagger into his base heart. Thus the villain perished."—"And justice," said the king, "directed your arm."

"O prince! continued Solyman, "I am still miserable. I have reason to believe, that some of your officers will detain that lady, as a prize taken in the castle of Sevasir."—"No officer of mine," replied the king, "shall be suffered to detain her: let me know her name, and she shall be immediately restored to you."—"Her name," said Solyman, "is Almena."

The king appeared disturbed, and walked backward and forward for some moments in the utmost confusion. He knew that Almena was the lady whom he had selected from the captives; and he had the most ardent affection for her. In a few moments he withdrew, and commanded Solyman to attend him the following day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE heart of the king was, in the mean time, distracted by different passions: urged by the most powerful love to detain Almena, and dissuaded from that by truth, humanity, and shame. "Am I," said he, "possessed of a throne, and shall I

have no more power to indulge my wishes, than the peasant of the field? What is the worth or the end of absolute power, if kings must tamely sacrifice their inclinations to the creatures they were born to command? Shall I give up such beauty as that of Almena; a beauty that has smitten my heart, and inspired me with such tenderness of affection as I never yet felt for woman? But Almena was Solyman's—it might be so; but she is now mine. Possession goes from one to another, according to the laws of nations; and, by those laws, Almena is mine.

"Why then do I feel such uneasy sensations, as much at the thoughts of keeping, as of parting with her? The laws of nature, the unvariable laws of nature and truth create them. The laws of nations ought always to be founded on these; and these suggest to me, that to keep Almena would be most injurious and inhuman. Shall I, who have condemned that in another, as a crime which deserved the punishment of death, commit the very same myself? what a detestable hypocrite shall I appear! Shall I, who promised the lover, that none of my officers should deprive him of Almena shall I degrade the king by doing what I would have punished in a subject? I love Almena, and should be exquisitely happy in the enjoyment of her; but shall I, therefore, make her miserable? how should I ever partake of happiness, if the object of my affections lived with me in sullen discontent, or inconsolable sorrow? Base and unworthy of the heart of man, must be that love, which would purchase its gratification by the misery of its object. The heart of Almena is Solyman's, and so shall be her person. Painful

is the alternative: but truth, and honour, and virtue, must prevail!"

Thus the generous king of Kanara overcame the efforts of importunate desire, by the force of virtue and reason; and nobly scorned to avail himself of his power against an unhappy man, who had been long persecuted by misfortune, and distressed in his love.

The hour came at which he had ordered Solyman to attend him. The king received him with a condescending smile; and, without the least appearance of uneasiness or dissatisfaction in his countenance, desired him not to be apprehensive about Almena, for that he should shortly be put in possession of her.

Having thus spoken, he went immediately to her apartment, and gently taking her hand, "Most beautiful of the daughters of India," said he, "cease your sorrows! I am not now come to offer you my love; but to recommend you to another lover, who possibly may be happier in your favour than I could ever hope to be: he is now in the palace; and if you will give me leave, I will introduce him to you."—"My heart," said Almena, "has been so much accustomed to new distresses, that it is not now shocked by their frequency: but if you have any pity for me, suffer me to bewail my miseries in solitude. Not to be interrupted in my sorrows, is all I ask; and that is not, surely, too much for you to grant." The king answered with a smile, "If I am not to be happy in your love, I am determined that none but the person whom I am about to introduce to you, shall be so;" and, hastily quitting the apartment, he returned with Solyman.

The lovers flew to each other's arms: "My Solyman!"—"My Almena!" In a few moments, being recollected, they threw themselves at the feet of the king; and Solyman, as well as the transports of his heart would give him leave, expressed his gratitude: "Generous prince," said he, "the thanks of Solyman are not worth your acceptance. But you will not be without a reward; yours shall be the supreme pleasure of conscious goodness; yours shall be the care of the eternal Providence, and the prayers and blessings of Solyman and Almena!"

In the gratitude of his heart Solyman offered the king his assistance in the prosecution of the war with the Sundians; but he humanely refused his offer, telling him,—That love and war were no allies; that his sufferings had already been too many and too great: that neither he should be exposed to danger, nor Almena to fear, on his account. He moreover told them, that if they were inclined to return by sea to the valley of Irwan, they should be attended by an armed vessel, to secure them from the assaults of an enemy. But this obliging offer they declined; Solyman was unwilling any more to risk that which was dearer than life; and Almena yet trembled at the thoughts of the Sundian pirate. They, therefore, notwithstanding the length and tediousness of the way, determined to go by land; and, having taken leave of the king, who supplied them with every necessary, and lent them his own beasts and attendants, they set their faces toward Dehli.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THEIR road was through a mountainous country, troublesome to the traveller; little cultivated by the labours, or enlivened by the habitations of men. But what are the difficulties which love and hope cannot surmount! they despise the threats of danger, and the toils of labour; and proceed with resolution through those perplexities, which by other eyes are beheld with despair. The travellers, thus animated, and looking forward to those delightful scenes of rest, those days of rural ease and happiness which they should enjoy in the valley of Irwan, passed over the rugged mountains that opposed their way, without the least sense of weariness or fear.

After travelling many days, without any accident or delay, more than the necessary refreshment of nature required, they arrived at Dehli. At the sight of her native place, Almena shed a tear of joy, and the lovers embraced each other with more than common tenderness; so much is there in the power of external circumstances to improve and exalt the pleasures of the mind. Almena always loved her Solyman with the most tender affection; but she loved him at Dehli more than in any other place. Delight is inseparable from the idea of those scenes, where we have passed the happy hours of childhood; and though, when in the maturity of life we revisit our native countries, we cannot enjoy that innocent cheerfulness, of which we still retain some notion; yet we are delighted with the remembrance of it, and those scenes are always dear to us.

Almena forgot not to visit her village, and the people whom she called her own. The poor inhabitants, at the sight of their benefactress, wept with pleasure; and she did not leave them, without giving them new exhortations to their duty, and new instances of her beneficence. Indeed, in all generous acts, she now doubled her assiduities; for she concluded, that, on account of her great and singular obligations to Providence, she ought, in gratitude, to have a superior portion of virtue.

After a short stay at Dehli, Solyman and Almena renewed their journey, and set forward to Ispahan. This route was longer; but it was more easy, and less exposed to robbers, than that which led to the Persian gulf. When they arrived at Ispahan, Solyman had the pleasure to find his friend the Merchant, who was still detained by business in that city. He easily made his apology, for not accepting, as he had proposed, his kind offer of a passage into Europe, by introducing him to Almena. He related to him their various interesting adventures, to which he listened with the eager curiosity and concern of a friend, acknowledging all along the hand of Providence in their preservation. For the amiable and accomplished Almena he felt great esteem; her pathetic descriptions, and her just and natural observations, were extremely entertaining and affecting. But he was most charmed with the character of the king of Kanara; and requested Almena to relate every particular of his behaviour.

"When I first beheld him," said she, "I perceived in his countenance a noble affability and openness which seemed to speak a great and ge-

nerous mind. This gave me some pleasure; as I might have hopes from his compassion, should it be my fate to be selected by him; such, you know, it was. When I was conducted into an apartment of the palace, he waited on me with the most affable politeness; and, seeing me in tears, he gently took my hand, and spoke to the follow- effect: "Be not distressed, fair Almena! Though you are in the power of a prince, you are not in the hands of a tyrant. If time, and the assiduities of tenderness, may prevail on you to return my love, I shall be happy; if not, you shall never be made miserable by cruelty or by violence." Consistent with his declaration was his whole conduct to me, during the time I was in his possession. How I regained my liberty you have already heard."

"To the character which you have already received of the Kanarian prince," said Solyman to the Merchant, "I will add a poetical portrait, which possibly may not be disagreeable to you: my gratitude for his favours, and my admiration of his virtues, induced me to attempt it."

THE AMIABLE KING.

The free-born muse her tribute rarely brings,
Or burns her incense to the power of kings;
But virtue ever shall her voice command,
Alike a spade or sceptre in her hand.
Is there a prince untainted with a throne,
That makes the interest of mankind his own;
Whose bounty knows no bounds of time or place,
Who nobly feels for all the human race;
A prince, that acts in reason's steady sphere,
No slave to passion, and no dupe to fear;

A breast, where mild humility resides,
Where virtue dictates, and where wisdom guides;
A mind that, stretch'd beyond the years of youth,
Explores the secret springs of taste and truth;
These, these are virtues, which the muse shall sing;
And plant, for these, her laurels round a king!
Kanara's monarch! this shall be thy praise,
For this, be crown'd with never-fading bays!

"Your verses," said the Merchant, "are very agreeable to me, for they are justly applicable to a prince, whom every merchant in Great Britain has the greatest reason to respect; and who is beloved by his subjects, as much as a father by his children: he too is young, as is the king of Kanara. But I have lately had the pleasure to hear of his marriage; and, at the same time I received from a literary correspondent, an ode on the occasion; which, as you have a poetical taste, I shall make no scruple to offer you."

HYMENEAL.

Awake, thou everlasting lyre!
That once the mighty Pindar strung,
When, rapt with more than mortal fire,
The gods of Greece he sung:
Awake!
Arrest the rapid foot of time again,
With liquid notes of joy, and pleasure's melting strain.

Crown'd with each beauteous flower that blows
On Acidalia's tuneful side;
With all Aonia's rosy pride,
Where numerous Aganippe flows;
From Thespian groves and fountains wild,
Come, thou yellow-vested boy,
Redolent of youth and joy,
Fair Urania's favour'd child!*

* See Catullus.

George to thee devotes the day :
To Hymen ! haste away !

Daughter of the genial main !
Queen of youth and rosy smiles,
Queen of dimple-dwelling wiles ;
Come, with all thy Paphian train !
O give the fair that blooms for Britain's throne
Thy melting charms of love, thy soul-enchanting zone.

Daughter of the genial main !
Bring that heart-dissolving power,
Which once in Ida's sacred bower
The soul of Jove oppos'd in vain :
The sire of gods thy conquering charms confess'd ;
And vanquish'd sunk, sunk down on Juno's fostering breast.

She comes ! The conscious sea subsides;
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides :
Smooth the silken surface lies,
Where Venus' flowery chariot flies :
Paphian airs in ambush sleep
On the still bosom of the deep ;
Paphian maids around her move,
Keen-eyed Hope, and Joy, and Love :
Their rosy breast a thousand Cupids lave ;
And dip their wanton wings, and beat the buxom wave.

But mark, of more than vulgar mien,
With regal grace, and radiant eye,
A form in youthful majesty!
Britain, hail thy favour'd queen !
For her, the conscious sea subsides,
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides :
O'er the glassy bosom'd main,
Venus leads her laughing train :
The Paphian maids move graceful by her side ;
And o'er the buxom waves, the rosy Cupids ride.

Fly, ye fairy-footed hours !
Fly, with aromatic flowers !
Such as, bath'd in orient dews,
Beauty's living glow diffuse ;

Such as in Idalia's grove
Breathe the sweets, the soul of love!

Come genial god of chaste delight,
With wreaths of festive roses crown'd,
And torch that burns with radiance bright,
And liberal robe that sweeps the ground,
Bring thy days of golden joy,
Pleasures pure that never cloy!
Bring to Britain's happy pair
All that's kind, and good, and fair!
George to thee devotes the day:
To Hymen! haste away!
Daughters of Jove! ye virgins sage,
That wait on Camus' hoary age;
That oft his winding vales along
Have smooth'd your silver-woven song;
O wake once more those lays sublime,
That live beyond the wrecks of time!
To crown your Albion's boasted pair,
The never fading wreath prepare;
While her rocks echo to this grateful strain,
"The friends of Freedom and of Britain reign!"

"The ode you have obliged me with," says Solyman, "though I do not very well understand it, gives me some idea of the enthusiasm and harmony of the English poetry. But I am less pleased with the productions of art in your country, than with the affectionate duty which the people show to their king: for that is the basis of civil happiness; and indeed every humane prince, who has the interest of his subjects at heart, will always reign in their affections.

"But now, my friend, if you are not too much taken, up with your concerns at Ispahan, will you be prevailed on to visit the valley of Irwan? As you are a lover of nature, and of the muses, you will there meet with much to entertain you;

at least, you will find a retreat from the fatigues of business, and the plagues of popularity. Almena too joins in this request, and will be glad of so entertaining a friend in the first stages of her retirement."

The Merchant accepted the invitation, and they left Ispahan the following day. He was desirous to hear from Almena the story of her captivity, and took the first opportunity to request it: "I have heard," said he, "from Solyman, the greatest part of your adventures; but I have not been informed how you passed that unhappy period of time, from your being taken by the Sundians, to your departure from the castle of Sevasir."

"You call back memory, sir," said Almena, "to the days of misery: but as I can at this distance look upon them without terror, I will endeavour to describe them to you.

"When I was first taken by the Sundians, my distraction was so great, that I retain no idea of what passed, till the captain of the vessel conveyed me on shore to the castle of Sevasir, and presented me, terrified and almost frantic as I was, to the detested governor; who, as I have been since informed, received such kind of acknowledgments from the seamen, for protecting them in their illegal and piratical captures.

"The wretch, as well as I remember, seemed totally insensible to my misery; and, with a smile upon his countenance, ordered his domestics to convey me to my apartments. These, indeed, wanted neither elegance nor convenience; but I despised the one, and neglected the other. The first evening I passed in the most painful anguish for the loss of Solyman, and the most dreadful ap-

prehensions of injurious treatment from the governor. The women that were about me, seemed the wretched remains of ruined innocence, who had first been victims to the desires of the tyrant, and afterwards made his slaves. Dreadful was the scene I had before me! Some of these unhappy creatures seemed to pity me, and to be concerned for my approaching misfortunes; while others, who with their virtue had lost their humanity, looked upon me with a careless scorn; pleased, I fear, with the thought, that they should see one woman more, as miserable and as despicable as themselves.

"Early the next morning, the governor came into my apartment; and, casting his eyes upon the bed on which I had not reposed: 'It seems, madam,' said he with a scornful smile, 'that you approve not of your lodgings; but a little time, it is to be presumed, will reconcile you to us.' These morning visits he constantly paid me; and as he always found me in sullen sorrow, he behaved much in the same manner. At last he changed his address; seemed to pity me; asked me for the story of my misfortunes; and, I believe, wept when he heard it: but as I was aware of the hypocrite, I was equally regardless of his pity, as I had been of his scorn; and still continued to look upon him with the same forbidding aversion and disdain.

"Thus passed my days in this confinement: but they would have been more intolerable, had I not found a harp in my apartments, which probably had been left there by some unhappy lady, who had possessed them before me. With this instrument I amused myself for many a melancholy

hour, which must otherwise have passed away in the most miserable languor. I also composed a song, suitable to my state of mind and my misfortunes, which I adapted to my harp, and which, I think, was as follows:

SONG.

'T is o'er—the pleasing prospect's o'er!
My weary heart can hope no more—
Then welcome, wan despair!
Approach with all thy dreadful train;
With anguish, discontent, and pain,
And thorny-pillow'd care!

Gay hope, and ease, and joy, and rest,
All, all that charms the peaceful breast,
For ever I resign.
Let pale anxiety instead,
That has not where to lay her head,
And lasting woe, be mine!

It comes! I feel the painful woe—
My eyes, for Solyman, will flow
In silent grief again;
Who wand'ring o'er some mountain drear
Now haply sheds the pensive tear,
And calls on me in vain.

Perhaps, along the lonely shores,
He now the sea's blue breast explores,
To watch the distant sail:
Perhaps, on Sundah's hills forlorn,
He faints, with aching toil o'erborn;
And life's last spirits fail.

Ah! no—the cruel thought forbear!
Avaunt, thou fiend of fell despair,
That only death canst give!
While Heaven eternal rules above,
Almena yet may find her love,
And Solyman may live!

"Such, sir, was my life in the castle of Sevasir; which passed like the waters of Zenderoud, that in some places are tortured by rocks and precipices, and in others languish in dull stagnation."

CHAPTER XXV.

The travellers had now proceeded on their way to the valley of Irwan, as far as the village of Abdat; where Solyman proposed that they should visit the lovers who owed their preservation to him. Of this he was the more desirous, as he had never seen them since he had first recommended them to the protection of his father: but the pleasure he proposed to himself from this visit, arose not from a desire of being flattered with their acknowledgments, but of beholding and enjoying their happiness.

The lovers received their benefactor with the greatest ardour of gratitude; but at the same time with that delicacy which proved it to be sincere: they were not loud in their acknowledgments, nor officious in their compliments; but yet their attention to their guests showed how much they were delighted with this opportunity of expressing their respect to Solyman. The travellers, in the meantime, were not less pleased to behold the peculiar happiness of the lovers, who seemed to have but one heart and one inclination. Solyman and Almena beheld in them a picture for themselves; and felt more sensibly their own felicity,

when they had before them so pleasing an image of it.

The Merchant too was delighted with this scene of conjugal happiness. "Such," said he to Solyman, "are the genuine fruits of those alliances which are made by love. When I behold them, I blush for myself and for my countrymen; for love, genuine love, as if it were no longer a passion essential to human nature, is looked upon as an Utopian idea, existing only in the imagination of poets and enthusiasts: hence, every tendency to it is ridiculed as romantic, and modern marriages are only contracts of convenience. A British lady is exposed to sale; and if she has a good person, as well as an ample fortune, she hopes by that addition only to fetch a higher price, and make a better market. This, however, it must be owned, is not the foible of women only; the men are equally, if not more mercenary; and have, if possible, more selfish views in their marriages; so that, in this case, cunning is only opposed to cunning. All this proceeds from that mischievous opinion, which measures happiness by the possessions of fortune. Hence, that mutual coldness and indifference which both experience before the marriage-torch is extinct: from new acquisitions of wealth, each expects new degrees of felicity, and both are disappointed; when they find themselves mistaken, destitute of that affectionate tenderness which endears the married state, they look upon each other as the cause of discontent, and disgust and aversion succeed. Thus they sacrifice to vanity, and reap the fruits of it!"

From the village of Abdat, Solyman and Al-

mena, with their friend the Merchant, proceeded to the valley of Irwan, where they found the aged Ardavan still living, and enjoying all the faculties of nature. The benevolent sage rejoiced to receive his son not only safe from the dangers of travel, but happy in the enjoyment of his love. With a heart full of tenderness, he thus conferred on both his paternal benediction:

"Children of the heart, and comfort of the years of Ardavan! Solyman shall be as the sun, when he cometh from the chambers of the east, when he spreadeth his glories over the waves of Ganges: my son shall be as the Euphrates, the river of plenty, whose waves are the delight of a thousand meadows; he shall be like the roe upon the mountains, that danceth in the vigour of his heart, and saith to the fence of the husbandmen, What art thou? His head shall be crowned with rays of Mithra, because his heart melted with compassion, and because his hand was stretched forth to relieve the children of affliction!

"Almena is fairer than the women of the east; she is more virtuous than the daughters of men: love dwelleth in her heart, and benevolence sitteth in her eye. She shall be like the tree that droppeth balm upon the flowers of Irwan; as the star of the evening reflected from the river. Her countenance shall be pleasant as the calm surface of the ocean, when the gilded clouds of evening blaze upon its bosom: she shall be as the moon, when she lendeth her rays to the traveller, and sheddeth a mild light over the groves and valleys. Her voice shall be as the voice of the turtle calling to her mate in the thickets of the forest. Like the stars that surround the chariot of the moon,

shall be the children of Almena; beautiful as the plants of the cedar, and sprightly as the fawns upon the mountains!"

Thus blessed by the voice of Ardavan, and happy in themselves, the virtuous Solyman and Almena live in the valley of Irwan! Each day is endeared by the delights of tender love; and the remembrance of past distresses is attended only with the pleasing sensations of gratitude to that Being, whose providence is over all his works.

HYMN TO THE ETERNAL PROVIDENCE.

Life of the world, immortal mind;
Father of all the human kind,
Whose boundless eye that knows no rest,
Intent on nature's ample breast,
Explores the space of earth and skies,
And sees eternal incense rise!
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

Though short the life thy goodness gave,
And soon descending to the grave;
Yet 'twas thy bounty, still to give
A being that can think and live;
In all thy works thy wisdom see,
And stretch its tow'ring mind to thee!
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

And still this poor contracted span,
This life that bears the name of man,
From thee derives its vital ray,
Eternal source of life and day!
Thy bounty still the sunshine pours,
That gilds its morn and evening hours.
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

Through error's maze, through folly's night,
The lamp of reason lends me light;

When stern affliction waves her rod,
My heart confides in thee, my God!
When nature sinks oppress'd with woes;
Ev'n then she finds in thee repose:
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

Affliction flies, and hope returns;
Her lamp with brighter splendour burns.
Gay love, with all his smiling train,
And peace and joy are here again.
These, these I know 'twas thine to give!
I trusted, and behold I live!
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

O may I still thy favour prove!
Still grant me gratitude and love.
Let truth and virtue guide my heart;
Nor peace, nor hope, nor joy depart.
But yet, whate'er my life may be,
My heart shall still repose on thee!
To thee my humble voice I raise;
Forgive, while I presume to praise.

END OF SOLYMAN AND ALMENA.

THE

VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES:

BY DR. JOHNSON.

LET observation with extensive view,
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride,
To tread the dreary paths without a guide;
As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good.
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows;
Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.

But scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.
Let hist'ry tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shake the madded land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;
Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of pow'r,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tow'r,
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Tho' confiscation's vultures hover round.
The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy,
Increase his riches and his peace destroy;
New fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.
Yet still one gen'ral cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival and the gaping heir.
Once more, Democritus! arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:
Thou, who couldst laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece;

Where wealth unlov'd without a mourner dy'd;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause;
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe!
Attentive, truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye.
To thee were solemn toys or empty show,
The robes of pleasure and the veils of woe:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.
Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at every glance on human kind;
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
Search every state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r.
Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;
Delusive Fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshipper no more;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;
From ev'ry room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright Palladium of the place,
And smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;

For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine:
The form distorted justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.
But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foe's doom, or guard her fav'rite's zeal?
Thro' Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles and controlling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes;
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.
In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand;
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign,
Thro' him the rays of regal bounty shine,
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
At once is lost the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glittering plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end be thine?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below.
What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings ally'd?
What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign?
When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And Bacon's * mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views? proceed, illustrious youth,
And virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth!
Yet should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat,
Till captive Science yields her last retreat,
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;

* There is a tradition, that the study of Friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall, when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it.

Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.
Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glittering eminence exempt from woes;
See when the vulgar 'scape, despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds, tho' smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,
And fatal Learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.
The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the Gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This pow'r has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,
Till Fame supplies the universal charm.

Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name,
And mortgag'd states their grandsires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths, which at last, the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes let Swedish Charles decide:
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought remain;
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost:
He comes, not want and cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing Glory! hide Pultowa's day.
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait;
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?

Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant, to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility, and barb'rous pride,
With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant Flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more;
Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind;
New pow'rs are claim'd, new pow'rs are still be-
Till rude resistance lops the spreading god; [stow'd,
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;
Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host.

The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarean pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway:
Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
From hill to hill the beacons rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;
The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
And all the sons of ravage, crowd the war;

The baffled prince in honour's flatt'ring bloom
Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,
His foes derision, and his subjects blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.
  Enlarge my life with multitude of days,
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted, is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy:
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r,
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more:
Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
And yield the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas! would touch th' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus
  near;
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'r attend,
Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend,
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave or positively wrong.
The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gath'ring sneer,
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
The watchful guests still hint the last offence,
The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,
Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.
  Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;

But unextinguish'd Av'rice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.
  But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
An age that melts in unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers,
The gen'ral fav'rite as the gen'ral friend:
Such age there is, and who could wish its end?
  Yet ev'n on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minute's flagging wings;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear.
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.
  But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of Fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end;
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise?
From Marlb'rough's eyes the streams of dotage
  flow,
And swift expires a driv'ller and a show.

The teeming mother, anxious for her race
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face;
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise,
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolic, and the dance by night,
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart,
What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry reign,
And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superior ply'd;
By Int'rest, Prudence; and by Flatt'ry, Pride.
Now Beauty falls betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing infamy proclaims the rest. [find?

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects
Must dull Suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in igorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease, petitions yet remain,
Which heav'n may hear, nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to heav'n the measure and the choice.

Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r.
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of heav'n ordain,
These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

THE END.

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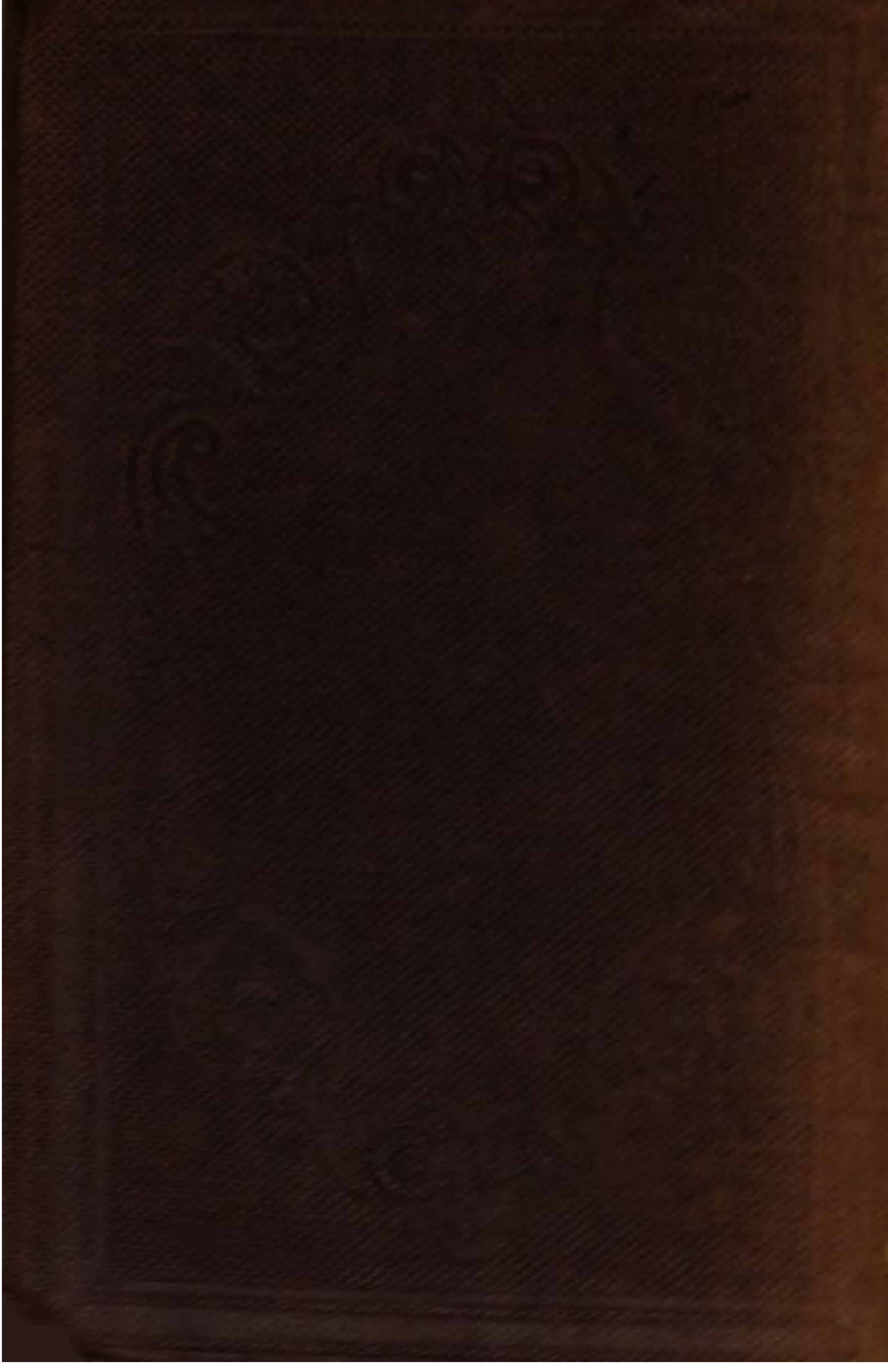

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MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

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The History of Solÿman and Almena by John Langhorne

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